PHILADELPHIA
CONVENTION
1856

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Republican Leader

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Abraham Lincoln's Political Career through 1860

Philadelphia Convention 1856

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THE WHIGS OF KENTUCKY. 1856

Proceedings of the Whig Meeting held in Lexington, April 12, 1856.

A number of Whigs assembled at Lexington, (Ky.) on the 12th of April, 1856, in answer to the following circular call:

SIR: It is a well-ascertained fact that there is a large number of our fellow citizens standing in an isolated position in reference to the existing political parties of the country, who are without that influence in our public affairs to which their numbers and their patriotism entitle them. Convinced that while measures may vary with the ever-changing circumstances which a rapidly-growing country like ours will produce, yet that principles are immutable, these men have not been willing to abandon the ground upon which they have heretofore stood, nor are they satisfied that the country is likely to be benefited or their own principles maintained by present party organizations.

They feel that it is their privilege to apply their principles to all new issues which may arise in the political history of their country, and to array themselves in favor of conservatism and against all encroachments upon the liberties of the people. To abandon their principles they feel would be to yield their most cherished hopes for a strong American nationality, by which our proud position as a people and the integrity of the Union can alone be preserved, and for which the great and good of the land have so long and so nobly struggled.

In order to efficiency in any emergency which may arise, and to the reassertion and defence of principles deemed fundamental, some concert of action amongst the persons alluded to is highly important. To secure this object we have determined to invite as many of those who sympathise with us in these feelings as can make it convenient, on so short a notice, to meet in the city of Lexington on the 12th day of April next, to confer together as to the best ulterior measures to be adopted to carry out these views; and we trust it may suit your convenience as well as your pleasure to be of that number.

Very respectfully, your fellow-citizens,

JOSHUA F. BELL, of Boyle county.
THOMAS J. HELM, of Glasgow.
P. DUDLEY, of Frankfort.
ADAM BEATTY, of Mason.
RICHARD COLLINS, of Mason.
THO. B. STEVENSON, of Mason.
BEVERLY D. WILLIAMS, of Boyle.
LEWIS E. HARVIE, of Franklin.
JAMES B CLAY, of Fayette.
J. B. TEMPLE, of Franklin.
JOHN S. MCFARLAND, of Daviess.
L. M. FLOURNOY, of McCracken.
WM. G. TALBOT, of Bourbon.
N. S. RAY, of Marion.
R. APPERSON, of Montgomery.
JOHN D. TAYLOR, of Mason.
MARSHALL KEY, of Mason.

On motion, Hon. RICHARD HAWES, of Bourbon, was chosen President, and THOMAS B. STEVENSON, of Maysville, Secretary.

The President addressed the meeting as follows:

GENTLEMEN: In pursuance of the circular letter which I have read to you, a number of gentlemen, who are members of the old Whig party, and who have not associated themselves with any of the new parties inaugurated since the last Presidential election, have met for the purpose of consulting on the existing state of public affairs and of adopting such a line of conduct and action as duty and patriotism may seem to demand.

It is known to the gentlemen who compose this meeting that the Whig party of Kentucky has for more than twenty-five years maintained a political ascendancy in our State Government and in her representation in the Federal Councils, with what benefit to the country we refer to the impartial judgment of the wise and good of all parties.

Within the last two years a new party, called the American party, has made such a heavy draft upon our strength as to deprive us of much of our vigor and efficiency, and unless we shall, by renewed efforts and organization, regain our superiority, we must become inactive spectators of public affairs or we shall be driven to other alliances.

We deeply regret that that portion of the American party which left our ranks, and from whose association we have hitherto derived such efficient strength in numbers, worth, and statesmanship, should have planted themselves on a new code of principles which to them is paramount, but to which we cannot subscribe consistently with our convictions of duty or propriety or with our construction of our Republican Constitution.

We cannot unite with our old Democratic opponents, for reasons which have been publicly proclaimed for more than twenty-five years.

We utterly repudiate all connexion with the Abolition and Freesoil parties of the free States, because of their agitation of the question of slavery, their invasion of the domestic rights and institutions of the slave States, and their usurped claims to the settlement and occupation of the Territories of the United States, to the exclusion of the equal participation of the people of the slave States.

We believe that, however our strength as a party has been impaired by the secession of our former friends, we should persevere in the effort to maintain and establish our long-cherished and honored principles, and that both duty and patriotism demand that we should not be inactive spectators of public affairs. We propose to reassert our old principles and to proclaim our opinions on the new party issues; and we earnestly invoke the co-operation of our fellow-citizens of the State and the Union in the reorganization of the Whig party, founded on the principles set forth in our address and resolutions, which are presented for their consideration and acceptance.

The committee, consisting of the PRESIDENT, SECRETARY, and the Hon. JOSHUA F. BELL, of Boyle, were appointed to report an address and resolutions setting forth the principles of the Whig party and the proposed objects of this meeting, who, after deliberation, reported an address to the Whigs of Kentucky and the Union and a platform of Whig principles and measures in the words following, to wit:

Address to the Whigs of Kentucky and of the Union

In obedience to a call circulated in all quarters of the State, a number of the Whigs of Kentucky assembled at Lexington on the 12th of April, 1856, to consider their duties and relations as citizens of the Republic, and, having earnestly deliberated thereupon, now respectfully submit their views in the subjoined Address and Platform, and solicit the fraternal consideration thereof by their brethren of Kentucky and the Union.

The time is now come, in our opinion, for the reorganization of the Whig party and for its re-appearance on the important theatre of political action. Its interposition in public affairs, in our judgment, is a duty demanded by principle and patriotism. Its members are not content to remain passive spectators, leaving the conduct of public affairs under the exclusive guidance and control of others. Such inaction would exhibit them in an attitude unworthy of their past, and faithless to themselves, to their principles, and to their country.

The old-line Whigs, as such, cannot consistently unite with any other existing party. They cannot join the Democratic party, because they do not approve its administrative policy. They cannot join the American party, because they believe its principles and spirit involve a menace against the securities of civil and religious liberty, and because, furthermore, that party has systematically introduced the alarming practice of subordinating the judiciary to political and party influence and control. They cannot join the Republican party of the North, because it is a fanatical and sectional party, whose policy, if carried out, will shatter the Union in fragments and drench the land in fraternal blood.

The Whig party, in the true manifestation of its principles and policy, is a National party. Reverence for the Constitution and devotion to the Union have ever been distinguishing evidences of its faith and practice. In the spirit of the illustrious patriot, WEBSTER, the Whigs know no North, no South, no East, no West. Their love and their loyalty apply to the whole Union. In the beautiful language of the gifted CHOATE, "the Whigs can join no party that does not carry the flag and keep step to the music of the Union."

The Whigs have no consistent alternative to resort to but the re-organization of their own party. And it is the best resort under all circumstances. This Republic has never seen a party more patriotic than the Whig par-

ty, and we have no hope of ever seeing a purer or more useful political organization. Its principles, its policy, and its inflexible patriotism make it the best hope of the country.

Its principles, founded on the basis of immutable truth, are indestructible. They will survive the vascillations of men, the mutations of platforms, and the fate of parties. They are but the natural and necessary deductions which practical wisdom, statesmanship, and patriotism evoke from the Constitution. They will continue vital as long as we may have a Constitution claiming our allegiance, a Union invoking our loyalty, a people worthy of our fraternity, a country soliciting our love, and hearts in our bosoms pulsating with the inspirations of patriotism and duty.

The measures of the Whig party, evermore conformable to the Constitution, look to the preservation of the Union, the prosperity and happiness of the people, and the greatness and glory of the nation.

The Whigs have adopted their principles from earnest and deliberate conviction of their truth, and, to vindicate their own consistency and integrity, they should adhere to them in every phase of fortune, prosperous or adverse; and in this connexion we cannot but be refreshed and encouraged by recurring, as we should often do, to the stimulating example of the immortal leader of the Whig party, whose voice, were it still articulate, would now but re-echo the voice which never failed, during his long and glorious life, to animate his compatriots with new energy and courage. In the most depressing periods of his political fortunes the soul of Henry Clay, like the soul of all the truly great, only gathered inspiration and courage from adversity. In 1829, when he seemed overwhelmed by an irremediable defeat, poising himself loftily and proudly on his own brave centre, he nobly said:

"Holding the principle that a citizen, as long as a single pulsation remains, is under an obligation to exert his utmost energies in the service of his country, if necessary, whether in private or public station, my friends here and every where may rest assured that, in either condition, I shall stand erect, with a spirit unconquered, whilst life endures, ready to second their exertions in the cause of liberty, the Union, and the national prosperity."

In 1844, after his defeat for the Presidency, that sad calamity to the country which filled the hearts of his friends with woe, still nobly disregarding "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune," and speaking specifically to the question, "What now is the duty of the Whig party?" he said:

"I know of only one safe rule, in all the vicissitudes of human life, public and private, and that is conscientiously to satisfy ourselves of what is right, and firmly and undeviatingly to pursue it under all circumstances, confiding in the great Ruler of the Universe for ultimate success. The Whigs are deliberately convinced of the truth and wisdom of the principles and measures which they have espoused. It seems, therefore, to me that they should persevere in contending for them; and that, adhering to their separate and distinct organization, they should treat all who have the good of their country in view with respect and sympathy, and invite their co-operation in securing patriotic objects which it has been their aim and purpose to accomplish."

Let us vindicate our own consistency and our reverence for his wisdom, integrity, and patriotism, by practising these exemplary maxims of Henry Clay.

Let us give no heed to the shallow invocation which deprecates our reorganization by the insidious plea that in the chances of political fortune our success may not be at once and fully assured. We never shall attain, we never shall deserve success without manfully contending for it, and thereby incurring the hazards of occasional defeat; but the final triumph of our principles, which perseverance will assuredly conquer, will atone for a hundred defeats. But we shall not be defeated. We shall triumph more speedily and gloriously than we anticipate if we but continue constant and true to our cause. The time is now propitious for an effort pending a Presidential canvass. We are deceived in the signs of the times if before November the Whig cause in Kentucky and throughout the Union be not presented to the people in an attitude of attraction and moral power greater than that of any other.

In various quarters of the Union the Whigs are actively reorganizing their old party. Our concurrent action will stimulate and strengthen their movements, as their co-operative action will impart additional moral power to our movements.

There are many noble patriots of distinguished ability in every section of the country, true and loyal to the Constitution, faithful to the Whig party, worthy of our confidence and fraternal regard, eminently qualified for and deserving of the highest offices of the Government. We owe it to them as well as to ourselves to afford them the encouragement of our support and the tribute of our gratitude, in view of the firmness and fidelity with which they have clung and still cling to us and to our common cause. They have deserted us for no new love, and we should be equally faithful in our attachment to them.

We subjoin a platform of Whig principles and measures which we believe to be worthy of the approbation and support of every national patriot in every section of the country. It is believed to comprehend every question, theoretical and practical, on which the fidelity of political parties will be tested by the people of the State and of the Union in the pending canvass.

We therefore respectfully recommend to the Whigs of the United States to assemble in convention at Louisville (in pursuance of the appointment of the Whig National Convention of 1852) on the 4th of July next, to consider the propriety of nominating Whig candidates for President and Vice President; and, with a view to promote the general objects contemplated, we also earnestly advise our Whig brethren of Kentucky to effect an immediate, thorough, and efficient organization in every county of the State.

Platform of Whig Principles and Measures.

The Whigs of Kentucky here assembled, loyal to the Constitution and the Union, relying upon the intelligence and virtue of the people, faithful to their ancient, conservative, republican creed, hereby reassert their honored principles, deeming them evermore true, vital, beneficent, national, and worthy of acceptance in every section of the Union.

1. That the Federal and State Governments, each supreme in its prescribed constitutional sphere, are not antagonistic the one to the other, but harmonious and co-operative; and respect for the just powers of both should be every where manifested by a faithful administration of and submission to the laws of each and all as indispensable to the preservation of the Union.

2. That the framers of the Constitution designed to render the Union indissoluble and immortal; and the defence of the Union against all enemies, foreign or domestic, is the highest injunction of honor and patriotism.

3. That every right protected by the Constitution should be faithfully accorded to every class of men to whom its provisions extend, without regard to section, birth, or religion of the parties entitled to such rights; and that loyalty to the Government, honesty, and capacity are the true tests of the eligibility of men to the enjoyment of the franchises of citizens.

4. That the Constitution vests in Congress no legislative power over slavery or any other domestic institution of the States; that new States formed out of the Territories of the United States, having adequate population, adopting republican government, and complying with the just requirements of the Constitution and laws, ought to be admitted into the Union on a footing of equality with other States, with or without slavery, as the good people thereof, being citizens of the United States, may, in their municipal character, be pleased to ordain; that all agitation of the slavery question, whether in States or Territories, should cease in Congress, and the existing laws should be acquiesced in by all lovers of the peace of the Union.

5. Peace, commerce, and friendly relations with all nations, but no entangling alliances with any; observing

neutrality and performing every just obligation towards all; commending the blessings of self-government and free institutions only by the example of our own peace, prosperity, and happiness.

6. That we adhere with inflexible fidelity to our ancient Whig principles, the spirit and object of which are: to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.

7. Economy and accountability in administration; revenue to be raised chiefly by duties on imports, and not by direct taxation, but, in levying duties, discriminating within the revenue standard, so as, while distributing the benefits and burdens of the policy fairly among all classes and sections, to encourage and protect home industry; works of improvement of national character necessary for national defence; the faithful administration of the public lands, and the funds derived therefrom, as a trust in behalf of all the States, on the principle of equal justice to all, having been acquired by the common blood and treasure of all; the just authority of Congress over the revenues, expenditures, and fiscal machinery of Government.

8 In State policy, the punctual payment of principal and interest of the public debt, obeying every obligation of duty or comity to the Federal and State Governments; the promotion of intellectual, moral, and physical improvement of people and country; guarding the judiciary in its purity and independence against the temptations and contaminations of political or party influence and control, and preserving inviolable the established safeguards of life, liberty, and property.

The Address and Platform, having been fully and carefully considered, were *unanimously* adopted, and the same were then subscribed by the following gentlemen:

R. Hawes, of Bourbon.
Tho. B. Stevenson, of Mason.
P. Dudley, of Franklin.
Squire Turner, of Madison.
Archie Dixon, of Henderson.
Joshua F. Bell, of Boyle.
James B. Clay, of Fayette.
John M. Clay, of Fayette.
Wm. R. Thompson, of Bullitt.
John A. Holton, of Franklin.
W. N. Haldeman, of Louisville.
John Onan, of Woodford.
R. Blain, of Lincoln.
J. B. Temple, of Franklin.
Lewis E. Harvie, of Franklin.
Beverly D. Williams, of Boyle.
Philip Speed, of Jefferson.
D. L. Price, of Woodford.
J. C. Lemon, of Scott.
A. S. McGroarty, of Boyle.
Thomas P. Jacob, of Louisville.
G. H. Cochran, of Louisville.
W. K. Taylor, of Frankfort.
Asbury Evans, of Covington.
John Todd, of Covington.

Messrs. Peter Dudley, Lewis E. Harvie, and John A. Holton, of Frankfort, were appointed an executive committee, instructed to cause twenty thousand copies of the proceedings to be printed and circulated, and to perform the general duties of a State Central, Executive, and Corresponding Committee.

It was resolved that the newspapers of all parties in Kentucky be respectfully solicited, as an act of courtesy to the Whig party, to publish especially the address and platform here presented, and such other proceedings of the meeting as they may be pleased to copy for the information of the people; and the same request was also addressed to the honorable patriarch paper of the Whig party, the *National Intelligencer*, of Washington, and such other papers of the Union as may be pleased to spread the proceedings before the people of the United States.

The meeting then adjourned to meet in convention of the Whigs of the United States, to be delegated by the people and held at Louisville, on the fourth day of July next. Attest: R. HAWES, President.

Thos. B. Stevenson, Secretary.

Harry J. Lake
Concord N. H.

THE FIRST REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION

THE convention which met in Pittsburg on the 22d of February, 1856, for the purpose of organizing a national Republican party, was called together by the chairmen of the Republican state committees of Ohio, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Vermont and Wisconsin. It was not a convention of delegates selected by constituent assemblies of the people, but a mass convention of men who favored the formation of a great national anti-slavery party and who volunteered their services in the undertaking. It was in session two days, and its purpose was fully accomplished, but the report of its proceedings in the newspapers of the time was meagre and nadequate. They were published in pamphlet soon after the convention, but they covered only a few pages, being a mere skeleton of what happened and even less satisfactory than the newspaper reports, while they gave the reader no conception of the spirit and character of the gathering. No roll of the members was preserved, while the several histories of political parties and conventions which have since appeared contain little more than a mere reference to the subject. Since the writer is one of the very few survivors of the convention, and was officially and somewhat actively connected with its proceedings, and since there is always a natural curiosity to know something of the beginnings of a great historic movement, perhaps a brief paper on the subject may prove timely and not entirely without value as a contribution to the literature of politics.

The creation of the proposed new party was a vexed problem. The Whig party had received its death-blow in the presidential campaign of 1852, but it still had a lingering and fragmentary existence. In Michigan its members had united with the Free Soilers and bolting Democrats in state convention as early as July 6, 1854, in forming a Republican party and giving it that name, and this action was followed soon after by like movements in Wisconsin and Vermont. In New York and Massachusetts the Whigs refused to disband, and thus prevented the desired action in these states during the years 1854 and 1855. In Indiana a combination was formed consisting of conservative Whigs, anti-Nebraska Democrats, Know-nothings and Free Soilers. It called itself "the People's Party," and for three years in succession, beginning in 1854, it disowned the name

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Republican and subordinated every question of principle to its desire for political success. The situation was most humiliating, but with the nomination of Frémont, Indiana finally started upon its journey out of the wilderness. The formation of a new party in Illinois in 1854 was attempted, but was defeated by the Whigs, who persuaded Abraham Lincoln to avoid any connection with such a movement. The political elements in that state were similar to those in Indiana. In Ohio the new party was launched in 1854 on the basis of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and opposition to the extension of slavery, and Mr. Chase was chosen senator in 1855. Like action was taken in Iowa. In Maine, as in Pennsylvania, a Republican party was not formed till 1856. The Whigs of the northern states generally, and a large proportion of the anti-Nebraska Democrats, finally found their way into the Republican camp through the lodges of Know-nothingism, which served as a convenient escape from their old political bosses. This secret political movement still further complicated the situation. Its action had a two-fold effect. On the one hand, it did good service in the breaking up of the old parties which had so long stood as the bulwarks of slavery; but on the other, its crusade against the Pope and the foreigner tended to balk the rising popular indignation caused by the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and thus to divide the people upon side issues instead of uniting them as one man on the single question of slavery. In 1855, Know-nothingism elected the governors of nine northern states and forty-three members of the national House of Representatives. It acted in the dark, and thus fearfully aggravated the political confusion and bewilderment of the times.

A very formidable element had to be reckoned with in the old Free Soil party, which rejoiced in the omens of an anti-slavery revival, but demanded the recognition of its principles in the new organization. This party had given over 291,000 votes in 1848, but four years later it gave only a little over 156,000. This falling off was chiefly caused by the Barnburners of New York and their sympathizers, who had rallied under the Free Soil banner in 1848 for the purpose of punishing their party for throwing Van Buren overboard in 1844, and who now returned to the party fold. The Free Soilers of 1852 however were stronger without this trading element than with it. They stood upon a magnificent platform, and they had the courage of their convictions; and they so commanded the respect of all parties that in 1853, before the repeal of the Missouri Compromise had been attempted, concerted measures had been extensively set on foot for the formation of a national anti-

slavery party consisting of Free Soilers, disbanded Whigs and dissatisfied Democrats. It is morally if not logically certain that such a party would have been organized, and would finally have triumphed if the repeal of the Missouri Compromise had never been proposed. The Free Soilers, however, were not partisans, and they were perfectly willing to disband their organization and lose themselves in a larger movement committed to the essential articles of their political faith. We ought to add, perhaps, that there was still another element which demanded attention in all the states. This was the temperance reform as expounded and enforced in Maine. This movement was then in its first stages, and its progress was amazing. Its champions were on fire with zeal, and their devotion to their cause was a passion. They disputed the proposition that slavery was the paramount question in our politics. Their demand was for the search, seizure, confiscation and destruction of liquors kept for illegal sale. The rum-seller was to be dealt with as a criminal, and the whole fabric of intemperance overthrown by the fiat of legislative prohibition. Such was the political situation in 1856. While the disruption of the old parties seemed easy and imminent, it was equally clear that the organization of their fragments into a new party on a true basis was a totally different problem.

The convention assembled at eleven o'clock in La Fayette Hall, a building which disappeared years ago to make room for a larger structure. It was called to order by Hon. Lawrence Brainerd, of Vermont, who read the call upon which it had convened and asked John A. King, of New York, a son of Rufus King, to act as temporary chairman. After brief and appropriate remarks, Mr. King called on the Rev. Owen Lovejoy, who was present as a representative from Illinois, to open the proceedings with prayer. The name of Lovejoy was an inspiration, for it recalled the murder of his brother by a mob at Alton in 1837, for merely exercising his constitutional right of free speech in a free state in talking about slavery. The heart of the people was manifestly and fervently with him, and there was a suppressed murmur of applause when he asked God to enlighten the mind of the President of the United States, and turn him from his evil ways, and if this was not possible, to take him away, so that an honest and God-fearing man might fill his place. A committee on permanent organization was then appointed, and while it was engaged in its work in an adjoining room the people seemed to be hungry for speeches. When Horace Greeley, with his earnest, kindly face and long white coat, was seen in the audience, he was enthusiastically called for. On taking the platform, he was received with prolonged cheers. He did not speak

at length, but said he had been in Washington several weeks, and that our friends there counselled extreme caution in our movements. He referred to the fact that the powers of the Federal government were in the hands of our enemies, mentioning particularly Jefferson Davis, the Secretary of War, from whom we could count upon no favors. The burden of his speech was the necessity for great caution and moderation on our part. This caused some surprise in the audience, as Mr. Greeley had not been generally regarded as a special examplar of the virtues he commended; and he afterwards explained himself in the *Tribune* by saying that he had reference to large numbers of good men who had joined the Know-nothing or American party who were at heart entirely with us, and he did not wish to antagonize them in any way in the proceedings of the convention. At the close of Mr. Greeley's remarks, Mr. Giddings was tumultuously called for, and responded by saying that Washington was the last place in the word to look for council or redress, and illustrated his meaning by relating an anecdote of two pious brothers named Joseph and John who in early times had begun a settlement in the West. Joseph prayed, "O Lord! we have begun a good work; we pray Thee to carry it on thus," giving specific directions. But John prayed, "O Lord! we have begun a good work; carry it on as You think best, and don't mind what Joe says." Mr. Giddings then introduced the Rev. Owen Lovejoy, of Illinois, "Not Joe, but John." Mr. Lovejoy's speech was characteristic. It was full of fire, denouncing the administration of Franklin Pierce and the interference of border-ruffians from Missouri with the affairs of Kansas. He hoped that the proceedings in that state would arouse such a storm of indignation as would show itself in Kansas and make every man a martyr rather than submit to the infamous laws of the Lecompton legislature. "Who would not lose his life in such a cause? In defense of Kansas I will offer myself as a captain, and if not wanted in that capacity, I will shoulder a gun and go as a private. If I use my Sharp's rifle, I will shoot in God's name. I am for war to the knife, and the knife to the hilt, if it must be so." Preston King, of New York, was called on for a speech, but excused himself, when Col. Gibson, of Ohio, being loudly called for, addressed the convention on the Know-nothing movement. I think he was then without a rival in the West as a stump speaker. There was an irresistible fascination in his oratory which recalled that of Prentiss of Mississippi in his palmiest days. No audience could ever grow tired of listening to him.

Simeon Draper of New York, from the committee on organization, now reported the following permanent officers:

President, Francis P. Blair, of Maryland; vice-presidents, Horatio G. Russ, New Hampshire; Lawrence Brainerd, Vermont; George Bliss, Massachusetts; James M. Bunce, Connecticut; R. G. Hazard, Rhode Island; E. D. Morgan, New York; W. P. Sherman, New Jersey; Joseph Farley, Virginia; Gen. Joseph Markle, Pennsylvania; W. S. Bailey, Kentucky; W. Penn Clarke, Iowa; R. P. Spalding, Ohio; George W. Julian, Indiana; John H. McMillan, Illincis; Gov. Kinsley S. Bingham, Michigan; David Jones, Wisconsin; T. P. Newton, Minnesota; Lewis Clephane, District of Columbia; secretaries, Russell Errett, Pennsylvania; D. R. Tilden, Ohio; Isaac Dayton, New York; John C. Vaughn, Illinois; J. W. Stone, Massachusetts.

Mr. Blair was escorted to the chair by Preston King of New York and Jacob Brinkerhoff of Ohio, and was greeted with unbounded enthusiasm. He was in feeble health, and probably the oldest man in the convention. He was a journalist of distinction and a politician of national reputation. He was a soldier in our last war with England and was everywhere known as the trusted friend of Gen. Jackson. He had separated from his party in 1848, and given his vote for Van Buren and Adams, and he appeared in this convention as one of the representatives of the South, which had delegates from Texas, Kentucky, Missouri, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina and Tennessee. Upon taking the chair, Mr. Blair remarked that this was the first speech he had ever been called on to make, and that he could not refrain from expressing how much he felt honored by the action of the convention in making him its president. He considered it, however, more as a compliment to the men with whom he had been associated and whom he represented than to any personal merit. He submitted a paper which he commended to the consideration of the convention as the platform of his Southern friends. It was not acted on. It was remarkably well written and evidently prepared with great care; but he strangely misconceived the spirit and purpose of the convention. His anti-slavery ideal was the Compromise of 1850, which had abandoned the Wilmot Proviso and paved the way for the repeal of the Missouri Compromise; and he now demanded the restoration of that Compromise as the sole panacea for our troubles. The convention was not beating a retreat to the finality platforms of 1852, but marching in the opposite direction. At the conclusion of Mr. Blair's remarks a recess was taken.

At the afternoon session Abijah Mann, of New York, offered a resolution which was adopted, that a committee of one from each state be appointed to draw up an address and resolutions for the

consideration of the convention. The following committee was selected: Abijah Mann, of New York; George M. Weston, Maine; F. C. Johnson, New Hampshire; Lawrence Brainerd, Vermont; E. R. Hoar, Massachusetts; ex-Gov. Chauncey F. Cleveland, Connecticut; R. G. Hazard, Rhode Island; F. Devereaux, New Jersey; John Allison, Pennsylvania; W. H. Dennison, Delaware; Francis P. Blair, Maryland; James S. Farley, Virginia; James Redpath, Missouri; W. S. Bailey, Kentucky; D. H. Spratt, California; C. G. Hawthorne, Iowa; James Dennison, Ohio; Oliver P. Morton, Indiana; John C. Vaughn, Illinois; Jacob M. Howard, Michigan; Israel Love, Wisconsin; S. N. Wood, Kansas; T. M. Houston, Minnesota; Lewis Clephane, District of Columbia.

The appointment of a committee on national organization was the next business in order, and was discussed at some length. It was finally decided that this committee should consist of one member from each state, and it was constituted as follows: Abner Hallowell, Maine; J. C. Beman, New Hampshire; Charles G. Davis, Massachusetts; Mark Howell, Connecticut; R. G. Hazard, Rhode Island; William A. Sackett, New York; C. M. K. Pollison, New Jersey; William H. Dennison, Delaware; William B. Thomas, Pennsylvania; F. Kemper, Missouri; W. S. Bailey, Kentucky; A. J. Stevens, Iowa; Charles Reemelin, Ohio; George W. Julian, Indiana; Owen Lovejoy, Illinois; Zachariah Chandler, Michigan; Charles Durkee, Wisconsin.

At this point, the presiding officer read a despatch from Philadelphia which he had just received, relative to the proceedings of the National Council of the American, or Know-nothing, party, which was then in session. It was as follows:

"Philadelphia, Pa., Feb. 22, 1856.

"The American party is no longer a unit. The national council has gone to pieces. Raise the Republican banner. The North Americans are with you.

Thomas Spooner."

The dispatch was loudly cheered by the convention. Speech-making now became the order of the day, and Preston King, Charles Reemelin, George W. Julian, Joshua R. Giddings and D. Ripley, of New Jersey, all addressed the convention at some length. Mr. King spoke in his customary tone of kindliness and conciliation, and his hopeful view of the progress of freedom and the outcome of the new movement was heartily responded to by the audience. By far the strongest speech of the convention was that of Charles Reemelin, then a prominent and influential German politician of

Cincinnati, who died a few years ago. His arraignment of Know-nothingism as a scheme of bigotry and intolerance, and a mischievous side-issue, was vigorous and unsparing. He was a Democrat, but the course of his party had made him an independent. He was a man of recognized ability and integrity, and his utterances were enthusiastically applauded. Mr. Julian spoke on the same subject and expressed kindred views. Mr. Giddings made one of his happiest efforts. He gave an amusing account of the recent struggle for the speakership which resulted in the election of Banks, interspersed with anecdotes which provoked roars of laughter and cheers. He was constitutionally hopeful, touching the progress of the anti-slavery cause, but recent events had given him new accessions of faith, and he poured himself forth in jubilant anticipations which seemed to be as delightful to his hearers as to himself. But the last speaker, Mr. Ripley, created the sensation of the day. He began by giving an account of his experience in the lumber business, and called himself "the saw-log man." The relevancy of his remarks to the business of the convention was exceedingly remote, and he was several times called to order; but the drollery of his effort and the flashes of humor which lighted up his backwoods style of oratory disarmed opposition, and he was allowed to proceed. It was said at the time that his speech rivalled the finest specimens of Yankee comedy. This closed the first day of the convention, and left its members in an enviable state of good humor. But it was not an accident. The Know-nothings had been subjected to pretty rough handling, and many believed that Mr. Greeley's counsel of "caution" and "moderation" had not been duly heeded. It was arranged, accordingly, that "the saw-log man" should be heard, as a diversion from the more serious work of the convention and a means of restoring general harmony and good-will.

When the convention assembled on the second day of its labors considerable time was occupied in listening to ten-minute speeches by representatives of the different states, giving an account of the progress of free principles in the various sections of the Union. A letter was then read from Cassius M. Clay, which was ordered to be printed. He was then in his prime, and it was one of the happiest of his notable public utterances. Its tone was in striking contrast with that of the paper submitted by Mr. Blair. The latter pleaded for moderation, and appealed to the spirit of compromise; but Clay pleaded for political courage and appealed to American manhood, while he invoked the spirit of our republican fathers in facing the despotism of the slave oligarchy. His words were shot and shell. As an impassioned and powerful arraignment of slavery

by a Southern man his letter reminded one of Jefferson's arraignment of George the Third, and through its extensive publication in the newspapers it must have done excellent service in guiding and inspiring the great party then about to be created.

As chairman of the committee on national organization, George W. Julian then submitted the report of that committee, which embodied the following recommendations:

1. The appointment of a national executive committee consisting of one from each state and constituted as follows: E. D. Morgan, New York, chairman; George G. Fogg, New Hampshire; N. P. Banks, Massachusetts; Lawrence Brainerd, Vermont; John M. Niles, Connecticut; William Chase, Jr., Rhode Island; C. M. K. Pollison, New Jersey; David Wilmot, Pennsylvania; F. P. Blair, Jr., Missouri; Rev. J. G. Fee, Kentucky; A. J. Stevens, Iowa; A. P. Stone, Ohio; William Grose, Indiana; E. D. Leland, Illinois; Charles Dickey, Michigan; Wyman Spooner, Wisconsin; Lewis Clephane, District of Columbia; ex-Governor Alexander Ramsey, Minnesota.

2. That the National Executive Committee be authorized to add to their number from each state not now represented in said committee, and to fill vacancies.

3. The committee further recommend the holding of a Republican National Convention for the nomination of candidates for President and Vice-President at Philadelphia, on Tuesday, the 17th day of June next, to be composed of delegates from the several states equal in number to twice the representation in Congress to which each state is entitled.

4. That the Republicans of the different states be recommended to complete their organization at the earliest practicable moment by the appointment of state, county and district committees; and the state and county committees are requested to organize the respective counties by Republican clubs in every town or township throughout the land.

On motion of S. N. Wood, of Kansas, Gen. Charles Robinson of that territory was made an additional member of the National Executive Committee; and the third recommendation, on the motion of Mr. Lovejoy, was amended so as to make the delegates to the national convention consist of three from each congressional district. The report of the committee on organization as thus amended was adopted, and the national Republican Party became a fact.

Mr. Mann, of New York, from the Committee on Address and Resolutions, now made his report. His address was very lengthy, occupying two hours in the reading, and was a pretty thorough

over-hauling of the slavery question in general, and particularly of the overthrow of the Missouri Compromise and the outrages in Kansas which followed. Its authorship was credited to Henry J. Raymond, of the *New York Times*, and it concluded as follows :

" We therefore declare to the people of the United States as the objects for which we unite in political action :

" 1. That we demand and shall attempt to secure the repeal of all laws which allow the introduction of slavery into territory now consecrated to freedom, and will resist by every constitutional means the existence of slavery in any of the territories of the United States ;

" 2. We will support by every lawful means our brethren in Kansas in their constitutional and manly resistance to the usurped authority of their lawless invaders ; and we will give the full weight of our political power in favor of the immediate admission of Kansas to the Union as a free, sovereign and independent state ;

" 3. Believing the present national administration has shown itself to be weak and faithless, and as its continuance in power is identified with the progress of the slave power to national supremacy, with the exclusion of freedom from the territories, and with unceasing civil discord, it is a leading purpose of our organization to oppose and overthrow it."

These declarations might have gone farther, but they were substantially sufficient. They demanded the freedom of Kansas and all our national territories, which meant, of course, the restriction of slavery to the states in which it existed. Such restriction, the slaveholders believed, would pave the way for its destruction. It was because they believed that the Wilmot Proviso threatened slavery with gradual suffocation and ultimate death that they demanded the abrogation of the Missouri Compromise and organized their bloody raid into Kansas. Their policy was the expansion of slavery as the chosen means of saving its life and perpetuating its rule, while the Republican policy was the restriction of slavery as the chosen means of saving the life of the nation and preserving the principles of democracy. No issue could have been more vital, and on this issue a great national party now planted itself and entered upon its stormy career.

This convention represented all of the sixteen northern and eight of the southern states. Its members came together in the dead of winter, when no candidates were to be nominated and no offices were to be divided. Probably a majority of them had passed the meridian of life, but all seemed equally in earnest and absorbed in their work. A few of them were already known to political fame,

such as Joshua R. Giddings, Preston King and David Wilmot, while others, like Zachariah Chandler, Edwin D. Morgan, and Oliver P. Morton, were afterwards to become honorably conspicuous. The great body of the members had never devoted themselves to the business of politics, and this was indicated by the composition of the several committees selected by the convention for the execution of its work. It was a season of unparallelled political chaos, in which doubt and apprehension largely ruled the hour. Good men sometimes lost their way, or saw but dimly the path of safety. Politic statesmen took counsel of their fears. A number of notable men in the convention took little or no part in its proceedings. Many undoubtedly failed to attend because they thought it wiser to wait upon the teaching of events. It was the element of uncalculating radicalism which baffled the policy of timidity and hesitation and saved the cause. Of the nine Free Soilers who held the balance of power in the lower branch of the Congress of 1849, five were in this convention and among its active workers. The convention stood by them. Only five of the northern states had taken the initiative in calling it ; but its members, most fortunately, had the courage of their convictions. Their devotion to the cause and singleness of purpose kept them steadfast. They could have had no conception of the magnitude of the work which they were beginning. They did not dream of the civil war which was to result from the splendid courage of the new party in standing by its principles, nor of the magnificent part it was to play in crushing a great slave-holders' rebellion. As little did they dream of the total extirpation of slavery in the United States in less than nine years, and its abolition throughout the civilized world which was to follow. They were building better than they knew. This was strikingly illustrated by Mr. Greeley's account of the convention in the *Tribune*, in which he said, "its moral and political effect will be felt for a quarter of a century." He did not see the greatness of the work which had been inaugurated, because the angle of his vision left it outside of his horizon; but he lived to see the curtain lifted, and to realize that the movement in which he had shared involved the life of the Republic, the emancipation of a race, and the grand march of democratic government towards its world-wide triumph.

George W. Julian.

Rapid and Unusual Rise of Abraham Lincoln to Political Power

BY JOHN D. ANDERSON.

"SOME are born great." So said Shakespeare 300 years ago, but his words had no application to the case of Abraham Lincoln. That Lincoln was the product of both attained greatness and of having greatness thrust upon him by reason of his attainments describes in a few words two facts which go some way at least toward making his life a little better understood. The fact that the period of his greatest fame—the presidential period—was so very brief must always remain the sad background to this great man's life. It covered but little more than five years, from the date of his election, in 1860, to the date of his death, in April, 1865. Before that we have what Drinkwater chooses to call his "fifty famelsss years." As a matter of fact, this must be reduced somewhat, for Lincoln was known far beyond the borders of Illinois before he had become half a century old.

Lincoln, unlike most men who embrace a professional career, had seemingly permitted nearly thirty years of his life to slip away before he reached the decision to become a lawyer. His first years of manhood were quite aimless. He was at forty no farther along in his legal attainments than hundreds of members of the bar in the middle west of those days. Perhaps he was not so far along as most of them. And his handicaps seemed much greater. He did not possess deep learning, nor was he looked upon as a profound student. He certainly lacked the social graces. At times he had shown an indifference to the law, and certain it is that politics interested him far more.

* * * *

IN comparison with his fellows, however, Lincoln, away back before he was licensed to appear in court, revealed a trait which few others possessed. It had been noticed and commented upon by his associates. It was a thing which singled him out in later life and contrasted him from most men. This was the heaven-sent gift of clear thinking and clear expression of his thoughts. These were his chief assets and did more for him than would have been done by both a university training and social distinction. Joseph H. Choate has said that "brains, common sense, force of character, tenacity of purpose, ready wit and the power of speech did the rest for Lincoln and supplied all the deficiencies of learning."

Another thing which helped Lincoln, and helped him mightily, was his grasp in all political matters. Tactically there have been few more gifted politicians than he time and again proved himself. This aptitude for public life had displayed itself early in his case, and it grew with training and experience as the years went on and he came more seasoned by practice.

After becoming a lawyer he was more quickly active in matters of a public character than to most would have seemed possible. At only thirty-seven he had been elected to Congress. He was advancing despite his many handicaps, but he must advance rapidly if at all. His term of two years at Washington gave him the right to hope that he might soon afterward be appointed commissioner of the land office, and later the way had been opened for appointment, had he so willed, to the governorship of Oregon.

All during the middle and late fifties there were numerous occasions when Lincoln saw his opportunity to take political steps forward. Some of them were long steps. The first chance of state-wide size showed itself early in 1856. Before that winter had gone the entire state of Illinois seemed to desire the formation of a new political party. It did not have its inception in the desire to supplant Stephen A. Douglas in the United States Senate. It was larger in its purpose than that, although it was becoming apparent that Senator Douglas' course was not one best calculated to insure his retention at Washington. The movement toward the formation of a new party first took concrete form at a meeting of fifteen editors of Illinois newspapers. The meeting was held on Washington's birthday at Decatur, and from there was issued a call for a delegate state convention of the "Anti-Nebraska party"—in other words, a free soil party.

* * * *

LINCOLN, unlike a lot of leaders possessed of little courage, did not hesitate to attend the Decatur meeting. The later convention was scheduled to meet at Bloomington in May. Lincoln saw that between those two dates the issues could be much more clearly defined and the convention a better ordered affair.

At that period the democratic party still remained sufficiently under the sway of Douglas to make him the dominant figure at the state convention. His candidate, William A. Richardson, was chosen as the party nominee for governor. In due course was held the Bloomington convention, attended by not less than 600 delegates of many parties, but all anti-Douglas. It may have been just then that Lincoln, seeing that the "Little Giant" was fast losing his strength, decided to test his own strength as a leader to the full.

The Bloomington convention nominated Col. William H. Bissell for governor. He had been a democrat, an earlier recognized follower of Douglas, but eight years before had broken with him. He had denounced disunion and in 1854 had opposed with vigor the Nebraska bill. There was perhaps no other figure in American public life who could have compared with Lincoln as an organizer of a new movement such as this. He was in his very element. That convention closed with one of Lincoln's master speeches—an address never reported. His final words formed an appeal to join the new party, to

"Come as the winds come, when forests are rended;
Come as the waves come, when navies are stranded."

All over the country at about the same time the new party was taking form in Illinois the same movement was in progress. Lincoln's name was attached to its leadership in the west as clearly as that of Salmon P. Chase in Ohio, or that of William H. Seward in New York. As we know, the first year's work nationally ended in the nomination at Philadelphia of John C. Fremont for President, of William L. Dayton of New Jersey, for Vice President, and then defeat for both by James Buchanan of Pennsylvania and John C. Breckenridge of Kentucky.

* * * *

BUT the republican convention had done for Lincoln what he had desired more than a nomination. It had given him over one hundred votes—a clear expression of his fitness to be one of its chief leaders. This was not a bad showing for a small town lawyer who had joined in the movement to start a new state party, already a national party, but a few months before. At the convention his friends had mustered for him more strength than national figures such as Charles Sumner, David Wilmot, Preston King, Nathaniel P. Banks and Cassius M. Clay. New England, Pennsylvania and California had, besides his own neighboring states, been generous in their support. Matters had gone much worse with Douglas. His eyes had been fixed upon the democrtic nomination for the presidency. It had gone to Buchanan, whom he had classed an "old fogy" four years earlier.

The campaign preceding the elec-

tion was a busy one for Abraham Lincoln. He was the head of the Fremont electoral ticket in Illinois and made about fifty addresses. It was in this contest that he said to the democrats: "We do not want to dissolve the Union; you shall not!"

No person is ever quite able to say just why one man is classed a success and another defined a failure. In the same way we are never quite able to discover just how men rise to great power and wide influence. The banker, the lawyer, the author, the physician, the politician—just how do they attain great prominence? Perhaps, though, we can the more easily discover how the man in public life attains success. He is more clearly before us for observation. In most cases do we not find the elements are less inherent in him than in the circumstances which push him forward?

Lincoln, during this period, we find going forward, but under his own and not party-borrowed power. The republican party, really organized nowhere earlier than the spring of 1856, had in the fall of that same year polled only about half a million less votes than the long organized democratic party. None of the republican leaders was discouraged nor was the party in danger of languishing. It was too firmly intrenched already and had attracted too many men of ability and prominence to expire so soon. Then, too, there seemed great need for it if the advance of slavery in the territory west of the Mississippi was to be checked or prohibited.

New parties and new political movements need new men with new ideas, new vigor and new punch. Lincoln was just such a person. The wary descendant of three generations of frontiersmen, but rapidly becoming trained in the art of statecraft; an eloquent speaker, with clear vision—these were assets which the new party leaders were not overlooking.

* * * *

UNLIKE so many men who might if they would go far in public life, Lincoln could ride comfortably in the political saddle. He was not easily jolted about or annoyed, and he had as quickly as possible after entering politics taken his position in the national rather than the local field. This was why he had challenged Douglas to debate. The latter was and had been for many years a national figure, and the part Lincoln played in these could make him also no less than a national figure. For days before one of these debates people would pour into the town where they were to occur. They came by steam packets from both up and down the Mississippi; mostly men—democrats, republicans, abolitionists, slaveowners, slave dealers—men of all walks of life.

Never were two men more unalike than Douglas and Lincoln. Douglas was short, stout, petulant, in whose "round, jolly, fruitful face," as Lincoln put it, "his followers have seen post offices, land offices, marshalships and cabinet appointments, charge ships and foreign missions bursting out in wonderful exuberance, ready to be laid hold of by their greedy hands." Douglas, the popular idol, as we have seen, was losing his political grip, but this did not necessarily mean that his loss of strength would make Lincoln stronger. They belonged to opposing parties. The casting aside of Douglas by his own party might easily mean the coming forward of some democratic leader who would muster greater strength than Stephen A. Douglas had ever possessed. In all this Lincoln was taking his chances should it come about that he was to be the leader of his party in 1860.

But in this possible situation there was much to discourage him. Seward seemed the more likely to secure the nomination at the hands of the new party. Lincoln could not help but see that the chances of its success were far brighter than they had been in 1856. The gubernatorial candidates of the party had been successful in many states, as they also had been in contests for seats in Congress. Old-time whigs, American party men, free-soilers and know-nothings, as well as anti-slave democrats, were becoming united in their views. Still, the welding of so many factions was certain to mean a heated convention when the time for nominations arrived.

* * * *

LINCOLN could scarcely hope for first place on the ticket. He might not even be honored with the vice presidential nomination. The vanquishing of Douglas in debate, if not at the polls, had been, after all, an easy matter—the result of superior wit, frankness and mostly in debate. The thing which was coming—the nomination for the presidency on the republican ticket—was a far bigger affair, with far more clever men than Douglas to match at wits, if he was to be the party candidate.

Those were indeed busy days for Lincoln. The campaign of 1858 in Illinois was scarcely over before Douglas was busy making speeches in the south. It was his method of seeking to gain prestige that he might be his party nominee for President two years later. Calls came from all over the country for speeches by Lincoln. He had finished Douglas only to find himself famous and possessed of a national reputation. Republican candidates for office and party leaders were turning to him for help. And it was he who pulled the party out of one especial danger at that time; the danger as he called it to "platform" an issue very popular in one state or locality without knowing or realizing what would be the effect in another state or locality. His constant aim was toward harmony at the national republican convention of 1860. How he succeeded—how he was finally nominated and elected are facts never to be forgotten.

How Lincoln was able to rise so rapidly from an almost unknown midwestern lawyer of six or seven years before to such great prominence has been something of a puzzle to most of us. Despite his late entrance into the law, and all the handicaps which formed so much of his earlier life, we find that at the time of his election only four presidents—Pierce, Polk, Fillmore and Tyler—had been younger men, and none of these had been more than two years his junior. Such had been the life of Lincoln in the few short years immediately preceding his election; the Lincoln who has been the inspiration of more men the world over than any other person in modern times.

33 N. Duke St., Lancaster, Pa.,
Nov. 28, 1938.

Dr. Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Foundation,
Ft. Wayne, Ind.

My dear sir:-

Hope you arrived back safely and enthused by the Penna. trip. I am sorry that I did not know of your proposed visit to Lancaster earlier - the first I knew of it was the account in our morning paper - as I would have endeavored to spend more time with you. I hope the time is now far distant when you will again be in this section.

Knowing that Lincoln had received 110 votes at the Convention in Phila. in 1856, I referred to the local paper files to find what account would be there of the Phila. convention, and the nomination of Lincoln for V. P. and have enclosed the account which appears in the Lancaster paper of that time. This may be material for a 'Lincoln Lore' of subject leading up to his nomination.

Respectfully,

C. H. Martin.

Lincoln was a delegate to the National Convention in Phila. in 1848, I understand, I propose to refer to the old paper files to see whether I can find anything in reference to his taking any part in those convention proceedings.

The Republican National Convention met in Musical Fund Hall, Philadelphia, Tuesday June 17, 1856 for the purpose of nominating candidates for offices of President and Vice President.

On Thursday June 19th the Convention came to order for the day at 10½ o'clock, proceeedings being opened with prayer by the Rev. Mr. Levy. Mr. E. W. Whelpley of N. J. moved the Convention now proceed to an informal ballot for Vice Pres. in order to signify the preferences of the delegates. The nomination for President already having been made.

After one or two other names were placed in nomination a delegate from Ill. (name not given) nominated Abraham Lincoln of Ill. He would only say of him ~~th~~ that he was a good fellow - a firm friend of freedom and an old Line Whig.

Mr. Archer of Ill. spoke in favor of Mr. Lincoln whom he had known from childhood and who was a pure patriot. He thought, with Lincoln, they would carry the State beyond a doubt for Fremont, who had just been nominated for the Presidency. Illinois would be safe without him, but doubly so with him. He was a worthy, estimable and safe man.

Judge Spaulding - I wish to ask a question - Can Mr. Lincoln fight ?

Mr. Archer replied yes sir, he is a son of Kentucky and a tall man whichever way you can fix it. (Cheers and laughter)

Judge Palmer of Ill. believed Lincoln would materially strengthen the ticket in the west.

The President of the Convention appointed tellers and balloting began resulting in Lincoln getting 110 votes. W. L. Dayton of N. J. received 259 votes. The next high man was David Wilmont with 43 votes.

After a few remarks the Convention proceeded to take formal votes for V. Pres. When the vote of Penna. had been cast a delegate from Ill. rose and in handsome manner withdrew Linoln's name.

December 7, 1938

Mr. C. H. Martin
33 North Duke Street
Lancaster, Pennsyvlania

Dear Mr. Martin:

Thank you very much for you very interesting letter containing source information relative to the National Convention in Philadelphia in 1848.

It may be possible that we shall wish to do a Lincoln Lore on that subject some time, although we have very little indeed about Lincoln's presence there.

Of course we have done something with the '56 Convention which placed Lincoln's name before the delegates as a candidate for Vice President. The material which you submitted is appreciated.

The Pennsylvania Group, I am sure, will check up on all of these historical events and give proper emphasis to them.

It was a pleasure indeed to meet you, and I thank you for the many courtesies which you extended to me while visiting in Lancaster.

Very truly yours,

LAW:EB

Director

LINCOLN LORE

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PHILADELPHIA CONVENTION OF 1856

This week the Republican National Convention will be held in Philadelphia where the party followers first assembled to nominate a Presidential candidate in the year 1856. Inasmuch as the name of Abraham Lincoln first received national recognition in the early Republican assembly in Philadelphia, it seems appropriate at this time to give a brief review of the proceedings as they relate to the efforts of Lincoln's friends to have him considered for the Vice-Presidency.

The Philadelphia Convention of 1856 was held pursuant to a call of the National Committee appointed at Pittsburgh on February 22. The delegates assembled on Tuesday, June 17, and were called to order by Hon. Edwin D. Morgan of New York.

Hon. Robert Emmet of New York was made temporary chairman and pointed to the Repeal of the Missouri Compromise as the motivating urge that brought into being the new party. He pleaded that all the " 'isms' in America might be merged into patriotism."

The permanent chairman of the convention was Col. Henry S. Lane of Indiana, who remarked that they had come together from "a sense of a common danger . . . and consequently they were there forgetting their former party ties, for the common good of all and because of their sacred love of liberty."

On the second day of the convention John C. Fremont of California was elected Presidential nominee on the first ballot. The following day, Thursday, June 19, the convention proceeded to choose a Vice-President. Mr. Edward W. Whelpley proposed the name of Hon. William L. Dayton of New Jersey, and with the consent of the convention read a speech Mr. Dayton had delivered at a Republican meeting. Mr. Jay of New Jersey, an Old-Line Democrat, also spoke in favor of Mr. Dayton.

According to the report of the convention: "Mr. Allison (John Allison of Pennsylvania) in continuation, said he had been requested to nominate as a candidate for the Vice-Presidency, Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois. (Cheers.) He knew him to be the prince of good fellows, and an Old-Line Whig. (Cheers.)"

Hon. John Palmer of Illinois, was recognized by the chair and said:

"I rise, like my friend from New Jersey. I, too, have been an Old-Line Democrat, and am very sorry for my last vote. (Applause.) I rise to second the presentation of the name of Abraham Lincoln for the Vice-Presidency. I have known him long, and I know he is a good man and a hard worker in the field, although I never heard him—for when he was on the stump, I always dodged. He is my first choice; Dayton, of New Jersey, is the next, and David Wilmot is the next. I admire Judge Wilmot, and I am going to name my next boy after him. (Laughter and applause.) We can lick Buchanan any way, but I think we can do it a little easier if we have Lincoln on the ticket with John C. Fremont."

Col. Wm. B. Archer addressed the chair and said he "would not detain the Convention but a moment. He had been acquainted with the man who had been named for 30 years. He had lived in Illinois 40 years. He had gone there when Illinois was a territory, and had lived there until it had grown to be a populous and flourishing State. During thirty years of that time, he had known Abraham Lincoln, and he knew him well. He was born in gallant Kentucky, and was now in the prime of life—just about 55 (47) years of age—and enjoying remarkably good health. (Applause.) And, besides, the speaker knew him to be as pure a patriot as ever lived. He would give the Convention to understand, that with him on the ticket, there was no danger of Northern Illinois. Illinois was safe with him, and he believed she was safe without him. (Laughter.) With him, however, she was doubly safe."

"Judge Spaulding, of Ohio—'Can he fight?' "

"The Speaker — (Emphatically) — 'Yes! (Great applause.) Have I not told you that he was born in Kentucky? (Applause.) He's strong mentally—he's strong physically—he's strong every way'."

On the first ballot the vote cast for the Vice-Presidential nomination resulted in the following totals:

"For William L. Dayton, of New Jersey, 253 votes; Nathaniel P. Banks, of Massachusetts, 46; Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois, 110; David Wilmot, of Pennsylvania, 43; John A. King, of New York, 9; Charles Sumner, of Massachusetts, 35; Lieut-Governor Thomas Ford, of Ohio, 5; Cassius M. Clay, of Kentucky, 3; Jacob Collamer, of Vermont, 15; Joshua R. Giddings, of Ohio, 2; Whitefield S. Johnson, of New Jersey, 2; Henry C. Carey, of Pennsylvania, 3; Aaron S. Pennington, of New Jersey, 1; Henry Wilson, of Massachusetts, 2; Gen. Samuel C. Pomeroy, of Kansas, 8."

The following states gave Lincoln one or more votes on the trial ballot: Maine, 1; New Hampshire, 8; Massachusetts, 7; Rhode Island, 2; New York, 3; Pennsylvania, 11; Kentucky, 5; Ohio, 2; Indiana, 26; Illinois, 33; Michigan, 5; and California, 12.

After it was apparent that Dayton would be elected on the formal vote, Judge Palmer of Illinois interrupted the balloting and said:

"In behalf of the delegation of the State of Illinois, I return thanks to such members of this Convention as have honored the favorite of our State with their vote. Illinois asks nothing for herself in this contest. She is devoted—and I trust that the result of the next election will prove that she is devoted—to the great cause that has brought us together. (Cheers.) She knew that in Abraham Lincoln we had a soldier tried and true. We offered him to the Republican party of the United States for the position that we have indicated, but we are content to prefer harmony and union to the success even of our cherished favorite. Therefore, we say to those of our friends who have honored us, we commend them to withdraw the votes thus cast for Mr. Lincoln, and give them that direction that will make the vote unanimous and harmonious for Wm. L. Dayton. (Loud applause.)"

After the balloting Mr. Van Dyke of New Jersey addressed the convention, and in the course of his remarks said:

"Gentlemen, I have another duty to perform, and it is to return my thanks for the very handsome manner in which Illinois has yielded her preferences (LOUD CHEERS) to New Jersey's favorite son. Gentlemen from Illinois, it was my pleasure to know right well the long 'Sucker' you presented. I knew Abraham Lincoln in Congress well, and for months I sat by his side. I knew him all through, and knew him to be a first-rate man in every respect; and if it had not been the will and pleasure of the Convention to have selected William L. Dayton, I know with what perfect alacrity I would have gone for him. I know we of New Jersey would have all gone for him if New Jersey had been called upon to make another sacrifice, and I know that none would have more readily consented to the sacrifice than the victim himself. (Loud cheers.) I thank you, therefore, gentlemen from Illinois, for the graceful manner in which you yielded your own preferences and unanimously voted for Mr. Dayton of New Jersey."

When Abraham Lincoln, then on the circuit at Urbana, Illinois, heard of his having been mentioned in the convention for the Vice-Presidency, he remarked that the Lincoln named must have been one of the famous Lincolns in Massachusetts. Apparently he had no inkling that his name was to be submitted.

K. M. Landis II:

First G.O.P. Parley Was Poor Man's Event

A LOT of delegates to the Republican convention are shocked by Wendell Willkie's suggestion that they should get right on the labor question.

And many labor leaders are inclined to scoff, thinking that the Republican party is the party of big business, always has been and always will be.

John C. Fremont.

Nobody remembers the first national convention of the Republican party which was held in Philadelphia on the 17th of June, 1856, and nominated for President John C. Fremont—"The Pathfinder."

It is safe to say that most of the 1944 delegates would take the first train home if they could be transported to that convention. It was not a rich man's convention.

The delegates were not chosen for their ability to make campaign contributions. It was an unorganized mass convention, and the states sent large or small delegations, depending on how many persons could buy railroad tickets.

* * *

Pressures from Below.

THE Republican party itself was an unorganized mass movement—the only major party in our history to spring up without the aid of an outstanding leader.

The Federalist party had been a closed corporation chartered by Washington, Hamilton and Adams. Jefferson organized the early Republicans, Jackson started the Democrats and the Whigs grouped themselves in hero worship around Henry Clay.

Economic and social pressures, coming from below, founded the Republican party.

Some people think Lincoln founded the Republican party, but as a matter of fact he thought it was too radical and held back for two years. When the first Illinois convention was held in Springfield Lincoln hitched up his ramshackle buggy and drove off to Tazewell County.

* * *

Wage Slavery An Issue.

THE man who had most to do with starting the new party was Horace Greeley, a Utopian Socialist. His New York Tribune was the national organ of the party.

Greeley's Tribune was not the same as the Chicago Tribune. Its chief European correspondent was Karl Marx, and its leading columnist was Albert Brisbane, the radical father of Arthur Brisbane.

Greeley's advice, "Go west, young man," became the slogan of the hell-raising farmer-labor movement, which saw in a free West the only escape from exploitation by Eastern capitalists.

It was not Negro slavery, but wage slavery and the financial squeeze that aroused the first Republicans, to the great dismay of business interests afraid of losing their cheap labor market and their profitable trade with the South.

There was no keeping cool with Coolidge. The first Republican campaign song was sung to the stirring air of the Marseillaise:

Arise, arise, ye brave,
And let your war cry be
Free speech, free press, free soil, free men,
Fremont and victory.

Once again labor is seeking new frontiers—this time of full production and full employment. Will the Republican party remember its youth?

Chi Sun - 6-28-44

Canada
London Free Press
Feb 13 - 1956

Strange Sequence In Lincoln Story

By Fred Landon

ONE GREAT impulse gave rise to the formation of the Republican party which presented its first candidate for the presidency just 100 years ago. That impulse was opposition to the extension of slavery in the territories which had been proposed by the Democratic party for Kansas and Nebraska. The Democratic candidate, John C. Buchanan, won over John C. Fremont but the results of the contest indicated that four years hence the new party was likely to be successful. The Republican candidate when four years had rolled around was Abraham Lincoln.

Lincoln ran the risk (for so it was to be regarded) of being the vice-presidential candidate in 1856. Had he accepted it might easily have ended his career. He was passed by because he was scarcely known outside the bounds of his own state of Illinois and was regarded only as a rather obscure westerner who had been in Congress during one single term.

* * *

It is true that Lincoln spoke many times in Illinois on behalf of Fremont during 1856 but he was not happy over the candidate who had been selected and could have had no heart in the contest had he been associated with Fremont. He knew that Fremont had no clear idea of the issues that were facing the country and that were leading it to the division that would possibly culminate in war. Conseqently the Lincoln career in 1856 is rather obscure though he began to forge to the front once the election was over. Readers of Lincoln's career find but little to record in 1856 but four years was to see an entirely different situation.

* * *

Lincoln's presence at Bloomington, Illinois, in May, 1856, when a state convention was held was noteworthy and influential for it was he who drew up the resolutions that were "unanimously accepted without change" and which united the various Illinois groups into a working compact party. One of his biographers has described his speech at Bloomington as "the greatest piece of oratory he ever produced." This is the famous speech about which a myth has developed that newspaper reporters were so thrilled and moved that they took no notes and it has become known as the "lost speech." This was a month before the Republican party's first nominating convention. In one of his speeches during 1856 Lincoln had declared that the country could not long endure half slave and half free. "What in God's name," said a friend after the meeting, "could induce you to promulgate such an opinion?" "Upon my soul," he said, "I think it is true" and he could not be argued out of his opinion.

* * *

Two years later, when he was a candidate against Stephen Douglas in Illinois for a seat in the Senate there were protests when he again proposed a similar utterance. Lincoln said: "I would rather be defeated with this expression in my speech, and uphold and discuss it before the people, than be victorious without it." One said that it was "ahead of its times," another that it was a "damned fool utterance," but Lincoln's answer we are told was substantially as follows: "Friends, this thing has been retarded long enough. The time has come when these sentiments should be uttered; and if it is decreed that I should go down because of this speech, then let me go down linked to the truth—let me die in the advocacy of what is just and right." Lincoln did go down in the contest with Douglas but when he did go down to defeat he at the same time assured that the next President would be a Republican.

* * *

It was in this senatorial contest of 1858 that Lincoln gathered to himself a band of supporters who had unbounded faith in him. His defeat in the contest with Douglas may have been little noticed outside of Illinois but his words in the campaign had made a stir. The young Republican party had not capitulated while the Democratic party had been split in two. There were important results to be drawn from the election figures of that year. A party but two years old had gained 114 electoral votes against 174 for its opponents. There was plainly a vitality in this new political organization that promised greater results when four years had gone around and the people would again register their views on the question of the extension of slavery.

* * *

When four years had passed by Abraham Lincoln was the candidate of his party and Fremont had passed into relative obscurity. Fortunately for Lincoln he had not been selected as vice-presidential candidate in 1856 or he might have passed into real obscurity. One may also remember that had he been successful in his contest with Douglas in 1858 and had gained a place in the Senate he might not have been thought of as a presidential candidate in 1860 to lead the Republicans to victory. Together there is a strange sequence in the developments that took place in the Lincoln career, partly the results of his own great political wisdom and partly arising from the changes that came in those last five years that preceded the break of North and South culminating in the solution for all time of the issue of human slavery in the North American republic.

Tails as Legs

(St. Louis Post Dispatch)

A little-known Lincoln story that is most appropriate to our times was told by Alan Barth at the public meeting sponsored by the St. Louis committee of the American Civil Liberties Union at Washington University.

The Civil War President's Cabinet had fallen into a wrangle. To quiet it, Mr. Lincoln asked how many legs a cow had. The disputants stopped long enough to chorus: "Four!" Then the President asked, "How many legs would a cow have if you counted the tail as a leg?" The Cabinet replied in unison: "Five!" Whereupon Mr. Lincoln said, "No. It would still have only four. Calling the tail a leg does not make it a leg."

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Founded 1824

1300 Locust Street • Philadelphia, Pa. 19107

July 15, 1968

Mr. R. Gerald McMurtry
The Lincoln National Life Foundation
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Mr. McMurtry:

Thank you for your letter of July 11.

There is no marker such as you describe on Musical Fund Hall.

Sincerely yours,

John D. Kilbourne,
Curator

JDK-mcD.

Lincoln received 110 votes for the vice-presidency in 1856 when the Republican party held its convention in the Musical Fund Hall in Philadelphia, Pa.

Lincoln Lore

April, 1975 — Bulletin of The Lincoln National Life Foundation...Mark E. Neely, Jr., Editor. Published each month by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801. — Number 1646

THE VICE-PRESIDENCY TWICE BECKONS LINCOLN

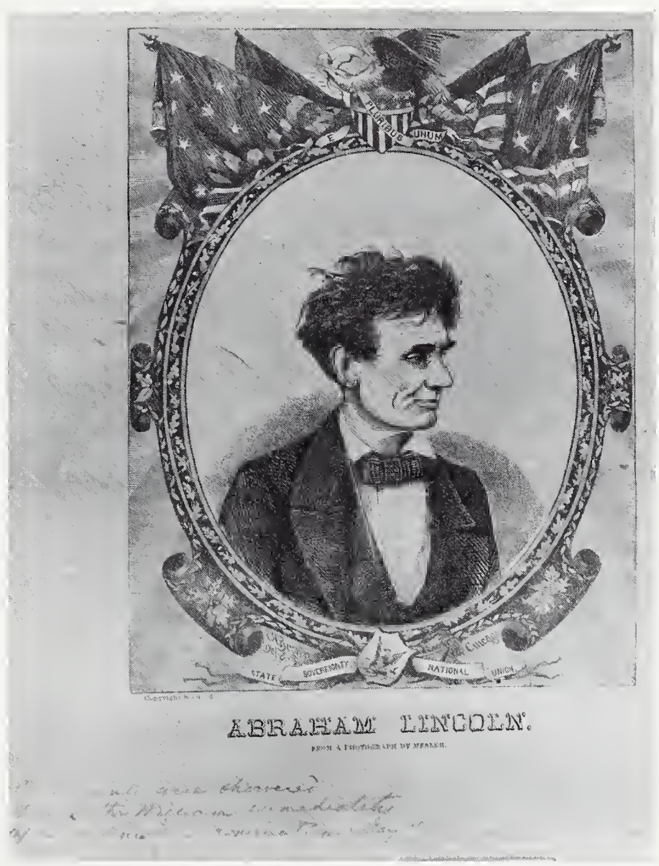
by Louis A. Warren

Editor's Note: The history of the Lincoln National Life Foundation now spans forty-seven years. In that time it has had only three directors, all of whom are still active in the Lincoln field. Dr. Louis A. Warren, our first director, is ninety years old this month and has graciously consented to do this guest article for *Lincoln Lore*. Dr. Warren entered the Lincoln field in 1926 with a book, *Lincoln's Parentage and Childhood,* which Benjamin Thomas has called "the most thoroughly documented study of the Lincolns' Kentucky years." Thomas adds, "Warren is chiefly responsible for our more favorable view of Thomas Lincoln." Almost fifty years later, Dr. Warren is still making contributions to the Lincoln field.

M.E.N., Jr.

Press, radio, and television, over the past several months, have been giving preferential attention to sensational stories associated with the Vice-Presidency of the Nation. The climax may have been reached in a meticulous investigation by Congress into the private life of the recently installed incumbent. With the public eye still focused on this controversial office, it would appear to be a favorable time to observe how Abraham Lincoln reacted upon twice being recommended as a candidate for the next to the highest office in our political system.

The unimpressive status of the position through the years is well set forth in the December, 1974, issue of *American History Illustrated,* under the abridged title, "Forgotten Men." This publication of the National Historical Society calls attention to the forty Vice-Presidents who have occupied the office up to August, 1974. Thirteen of them were elevated to the Presidency, and seven others were selected who will be remembered for episodes unrelated to the office routine. The remaining twenty, or one half the total number of the men occupying this high station, were grouped in a category described as, "men past-recollection."



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

This lithograph of "Abraham Lincoln" from a photograph by Hesler bears the imprint of E. H. Brown, Del & Sc, Chicago. On the lower margin there is a pencil notation by George William Curtis: "These prints were showered through the Wigwam immediately after Mr. Lincoln's nomination May 1860. (Geo. Wm. Curtis)." The Lincoln National Life Foundation also owns another print of this same lithograph which carries a notation in ink by John G. Nicolay: "The above was circulated in Chicago on the day of Lincoln's first nomination for President." These are the only two known examples of this lithograph in existence.

One commentator, on referring to the insignificance of the position, referred to it as a "sinecure," which, according to Webster, is "an office or position of value which involves little or no responsibility or service." One authority refers to the holder of the title as, "A second-rate man agreeable to the wire pullers, always smuggled in."

Occasionally, during the past few years, the advancement of the Vice-President to the Presidency through constitutional procedure has occurred. This has had a tendency to make the office seem more desirable than heretofore. The recent appointment to the Vice-Presidency of a well known statesman of recognized ability, a member of one of America's first families, may suggest a revision of the public opinion about the status of the formerly unwanted office. Certainly it will be more inviting to the political aspirants.

Before this new appraisal of the seat is accepted, it is important that it should be reviewed in retrospect to appreciate more fully how Abraham Lincoln, fortunately, escaped the ordeal of the

Vice-Presidency. The earliest threat was at the first National Republican Convention in Philadelphia in 1856 and once again at the convocation in the Chicago Wigwam in 1860.

Abraham Lincoln's political rebirth occurred about five years after he had served a term in Congress. His return to the political forum is recorded in a third-person autobiographical sketch: "In 1854, his profession had almost superseded the thought of politics in his mind, when the repeal of the Missouri compromise aroused him as he had never been before." Inasmuch as the repeal was passed by the Senate on March 5, 1854, and subsequently signed by the President, it was called the birthday of the newly organized Republican party. The official birthday was later established as July 6, 1854.

An observer's account of Lincoln's return to the political scene is recorded by Richard Yates, at what is known as "The Springfield Jubilee," celebrating the Republican victories in 1860. He stated: "I had spoken and voted against the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and when on my return home at the close of the long session of 1854, having published a card that I would not be a candidate for re-election, I was met at the depot in Springfield by Mr. Lincoln. He said I had taken the right course on this question, and though he could not promise me success in a district so largely against us, yet he hoped for the sake of the principle, I would run, and if I would, he would take the stump in my behalf."

Lincoln briefly referred to the original Compromise in these words: "At length a compromise was made, in which, like all compromises, both sides yielded something. It was a law passed on the 6th day of March, 1820, providing that Missouri might come into the Union *with* slavery, but that in all the remaining part of the territory purchased of France, which lies north of 36 degrees and 30 minutes north latitude, slavery should never be permitted."

Four months after Lincoln had been awakened by its repeal and had again entered the political arena, another incident occurred which greatly stimulated his newly acquired interest in the "No Extension of Slavery" movement. On July 10, 1854, Cassius Marcellus Clay of Lexington, Kentucky, a relative of Henry Clay, paid a visit to Springfield. The presence of the anti-slavery exponent in the capital city must have aroused in Mary Todd Lincoln many reminiscences of her early Lexington days. While Cassius was attending Transylvania University in Lexington, the dormitory burned and Cassius was one of the students who found temporary lodging in the Todd home. He stated on one occasion: "I was on very agreeable terms with the Todd Family, who were always my avowed friends during my antislavery career." He later graduated from Yale, and, while in New Haven, he was greatly influenced by William Lloyd Garrison and became an exponent of the abolitionist's philosophy. Later, at Lexington, a month before his visit to Springfield, he established an anti-slavery newspaper called *The True American.*

Upon Clay's visit to Springfield, the Secretary of State refused him permission to speak in the State House. Cassius responded that even in his own state — a slave state — the common courtesy of citizenship had never been withheld from him; no court-house or state-house door had ever been shut in his face. He gave his speech in Mather's Grove. This rebuff recalls an incident which illustrates the dynamic personality of Cassius Clay.

A Kentucky town in which he was to speak posted warnings that "no anti-slavery speeches will be permitted under penalty of death." Upon Clay's arrival, says William H. Townsend in *Lincoln and His Wife's Home Town,* "he walked unattended down the center aisle of the packed court-room, mounted the rostrum and calmly faced the muttering, jostling crowd." These were his introductory remarks: "'For those who support the laws of the country,' he announced in an even, steady voice, 'I have this argument,' and he placed a copy of the Constitution on one end of the table. 'For those who believe in the Bible, I have an argument from this,' and he placed a copy of the New Testament on the other end of the table. 'And for those who regard neither the laws of God or man I have this argument,' and he laid a brace of long black-barreled pistols with his bowie-knife on the table in front of him. Then he plunged, without interruption, into his speech."

Sometime after Clay returned from the Springfield visit he remarked: "Lincoln gave me a most patient hearing. I shall never forget his long, ungainly form, and his ever sad and homely face. . . . I flatter myself, when [I recall how] Lincoln listened to my animated appeals for universal liberty for more than two hours, that I sowed seed in good ground, which in the providence of God produced in time good fruit."

The Illinois contingent of the newly organized party was somewhat tardy in perfecting the state organization, but on May 29, 1856, a state convention was called to meet at Bloomington. Among the many speeches made, the closing address by Lincoln was easily the feature of the day and possibly his most eloquent declaration during his Illinois years. It became known as "The Lost Speech," inasmuch as the reporters became entranced by his oratory and no one of them made an available recording of it.

The Washington press on January 17, 1856, published a call to "The Republicans of the Union to meet at Pittsburg on the 22nd. of February, for the purpose of perfecting a national organization." Another incentive was "the providing for a National Delegate Convention of the Republican Party on a subsequent date, to nominate candidates for the Presidency and Vice-Presidency." There was also released an urgent appeal to take a stand on "the only great issue now before the Country—slavery or freedom."

Nineteen days after the Illinois convocation at Bloomington, the national convention opened its sessions at Philadelphia on Tuesday, June 17, 1856. The permanent chairman was Colonel Henry S. Lane of Indiana. John C. Fremont of California was chosen as the Presidential nominee on the first ballot. The chief order of business for the second day was the selection of a candidate for the Vice-Presidency. The trial ballot for the nomination recorded these several aspirants with the total number of votes each one received: William L. Dayton, New Jersey, 253; Nathaniel P. Banks, Massachusetts, 46; Abraham Lincoln, Illinois, 110; David Wilmot, Pennslyvania, 43; John A. King, New York, 9; Charles Sumner, Massachusetts, 35; Lieut. Thomas Ford, Ohio, 7; Cassius M. Clay, Kentucky, 3; Jacob Collamer, Vermont, 15; Joshua R. Giddings, Ohio, 2; Whitfield S. Johnson, New Jersey, 2; Henry C. Carey, Pennsylvania, 3; Aaron S. Pennington, New Jersey, 1; Henry Wilson, Massachusetts, 1; Gen. Samuel C. Pomeroy, Kansas, 8. It will be observed that Dayton received less than one half the total votes, while Lincoln was given twice as many votes as any of the other participating candidates.

A Pennsylvania delegate, John Allison, placed Lincoln's name in nomination, but, when the totals showed a majority of the votes were cast for Dayton, in order to reach a unanimous choice, Lincoln's name was withdrawn, followed by all of the other competitors. During the nominating speeches, Lincoln received many complimentary comments. It was an honor indeed to be the runner-up and a popular candidate for the Vice-Presidential nomination at the first national convention of the newly organized Republican party.

One of the stories of how Lincoln was first informed about the results of the voting, associates him with David Davis, the presiding judge on the Eighth Judicial Circuit of Illinois, where Lincoln practiced law. Davis was at the hotel in the town where the court was in session, when the mail arrived with news from the convention. He observed Lincoln coming down the street which caused him frantically to wave the paper reporting that Lincoln had received 110 votes for the Vice-Presidency at the convention. When Lincoln arrived and was given the information, he commented: "I reckon that ain't me; there's another great man in Massachusetts named Lincoln, and I reckon it's him." But, he was mistaken.

Seven years earlier Lincoln had visited the Bay State where he had spoken in favor of Zachary Taylor, Whig candidate for the Presidency. His schedule brought him to Worcester on September 13, 1848, where he was entertained at dinner in the home of Levi Lincoln, mayor of the city, and the Governor of the State from 1825 to 1834. Several distinguished guests were present and one of them recalled: "I well remember the jokes between Governor Lincoln and Abraham Lincoln as to their presumed relationship." At last the latter said: "I *hope* we belong, as the Scotch say, to the same clan; but I *know* one thing, and that is, that we are both good Whigs."

This episode recalls a visit which the author made to this same house in which Abraham Lincoln was entertained. My host, Waldo Lincoln, grandson of Levi Lincoln, mentioned at dinner that I was seated in the same position at the table, possibly in the same chair, which Abraham Lincoln had occupied, when a guest in 1848. It was the above mentioned Waldo

Lincoln who prepared the exhaustive genealogy of the Lincoln Family, showing the relationship of the Illinois and the Worcester, Massachusetts, branches. Abraham had properly identified Levi as "the great man in Massachusetts named Lincoln." Sidetracked by ancestral and personal references, we should return to Philadelphia for a final comment.

It is evident from Abraham's complete surprise and apparent confusion about the identity of the Lincoln who had been the runner-up on the trial ballot at Philadelphia, that he was unaware of any state-wide plans, then underway or previously made, to place his name among the candidates for the Vice-Presidential nomination in 1856. While his term in Congress had been of local significance, the beckoning gesture for the national office had lifted him out of local politics and raised him to a station of nationwide attention. He could now be considered as a leading Western representative of the newly organized Republican party.

One of his earliest recognitions of leadership was revealed in the state convention of 1858, which named him, "The first and only choice for a seat in the United States Senate." His acceptance address, which clearly set forth the issue for the subsequent campaign, became known as "The House Divided Speech," so designated because of his startling premise, "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

His opponent in the contest, Stephen A. Douglas, was nationally known and the series of debates arranged attracted the attention of political America. Recognizing Douglas as the key figure in the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and Lincoln as the chief Western spokesman for the "No Extension of Slavery" contingent, the contest became something more than a local combat. While Lincoln failed to gain the senatorial seat, he did poll the larger number of popular votes and established himself as the leading Westerner opposed to the extension of slavery.

Lincoln's rise to fame, because of his solid arguments during the debates, assured for him serious consideration for a place on the national ticket of his party in the next Republican Convention. One of the earliest feelers which arrived was a letter from Thomas J. Pickett of Rock Island, suggesting that the press of Illinois put Lincoln forward for the Presidency of the United States. On April 16, 1859, Lincoln replied to this suggestion as follows: ". . . I do not think myself fit for the Presidency. I certainly am flattered, and gratified, that some partial friends think of me in that connection. . . ." Reflecting on the vote at the Philadelphia Convention, he may have felt he was "fit" for the Vice-Presidency.

Two books were published in 1859, presenting the names of those who might be contestants in the presidential race of 1860. One was by D. W. Bartlett with the title, *Presidential Candidates,* listing twenty-one prospective contenders. The other was by John Savage with the caption, *Our Living Representative Men,* noting thirty-four qualified leaders. It is noteworthy that the later published Savage book named all of the Bartlett list with but two exceptions. This combined list of important men might serve as a political "Who's Who" for 1860 and is submitted with party affiliations noted:.

Democrat: John Minor Botts, John C. Breckenridge, Albert G. Brown, Howell Cobb, Caleb Cushing, George M. Dallas, Jefferson Davis, Daniel S. Dickinson, Stephen A. Douglas, James Guthrie, James H. Hammond, Sam Houston, R.M.T. Hunter, Andrew Johnson, Joseph Lane, James L. Orr, John M. Read, Horatio Seymour, John Slidell, Alexander H. Stephens, Henry A. Wise.

Constitutional Union: John Bell, John J. Crittenden, Edward Everett, Millard Fillmore.

Republican: Nathaniel P. Banks, Edward Bates, Simon Cameron, Salmon P. Chase, William L. Dayton, John C. Fremont, John P. Hale, John McLean, William H. Seward, Henry Wilson.

Unclassified: John E. Wool.

It is not strange that the name of Lincoln is missing, as the manuscripts were prepared before his name had become prominent in the East. His address at Cooper Union in New York City on February 27, 1860, and the subsequent trip to New England are recognized as his introduction to that section of the country. The Cooper Union Address before the Young Men's Republican Union of New York is accepted as the most comprehensive political address which he had given up to that time.

One of the aspirants for the Presidency in 1860 was Simon Cameron, a Senator from Pennsylvania. As early as October 14, W.E. Fraser, one of his supporters, wrote to Lincoln proposing a Cameron-Lincoln combination for the Republican ticket. On November 1, 1859, Lincoln replied: ". . . I shall be heartily for it, *after* it shall have been fairly nominated by a Republican national convention. . . ." This statement documents the assertion, that he was not irresponsive to being named as a Vice-Presidential candidate, but the reply also left open the opportunity for an ultimate decision before the convention was called to order. Lincoln's refusal to approve the ticket immediately did not prevent the publication of a campaign pamphlet entitled *Address of the Cameron And Lincoln Club of the City of Chicago, Ill., To The People Of The North West.* This final appeal in the pamphlet gives emphasis to Lincoln's anticipated contribution as a member of the team: "The nomination of Mr. Lincoln will secure us the votes of Illinois and Indiana, and we hope to carry Oregon and California also. We *may* succeed with other candidates; with Cameron and Lincoln, we *will.*"

Lincoln, when en route to New York for his speech at Cooper Union, while passing through Philadelphia, was handed the cards of Simon Cameron and David Wilmot but was unable to contact them before leaving the city. Four months had passed since they first solicited Lincoln's partnership on the ticket, but apparently they feared he would make some agreement about the Vice-Presidency with Seward, while in New York. It is evident that a Seward-Lincoln ticket had already been proposed.

It seems probable that the Young Men's Republican Union may have had some specific reason for offering Lincoln 200 dollars to speak in New York, and very likely it had political relevancy. His appearance was a rousing success and his introduction to leading celebrities of the East opened up new political horizons.

En route to New Hampshire to visit his son Robert, attending Exeter Academy, he was joined on the train by Frederick Smyth who was to introduce him at Manchester. Lincoln had been reading an address Seward had delivered before the United States Senate, and laying the paper down he said to Smyth, "That speech will make Mr. Seward the next President of the United States." However, when Smyth came to the conclusion of his introductory remarks, in presenting Lincoln he said: "The next President of the United States!"

An interesting phase of his New England trip was his purposely passing through Massachusetts without making a single speech. The state had already announced its support of Seward, and apparently Lincoln did not wish to exhibit any display of rivalry. Upon his return to New York, however, the situation there seems to have changed. One of the young men advised him: "When he came, they thought he might make a good running mate for Seward, but after hearing him, they are for him for President, regardless of what happens to Seward."

Succeeding the New York visit, Lincoln was the most coveted Vice-Presidential candidate in the nation. These possible pairings were published in the press: Cameron and Lincoln, Seward and Lincoln, Chase and Lincoln, also Horace Greeley's choice, Dayton and Lincoln, possibly others. In 1860 the Vice-Presidency beckoned Lincoln in preference to all others. Lincoln had numerous advantages as a Vice-Presidential nominee (and, as it turned out, as a Presidential nominee). Unlike Salmon Chase and Simon Cameron, who had bitter factional enemies in their home states, Lincoln's support in Illinois was secure and united, and the Republicans needed Illinois. Unlike Cameron and Edward Bates, he was sound on the slavery issue because he had steadily opposed slavery as a moral evil. He had an instinct, too, for avoiding controversial stands on unessential issues. Personally temperate, Lincoln had avoided the prohibition agitation, especially when it became a hot issue in Illinois after 1853. Despising the principles of the Know-Nothing agitation, Lincoln avoided public condemnations of that party's adherents. He also avoided the side issue of disobedience to the Fugitive Slave Law.

Abraham's auspicious speaking itinerary in the East gave a new impetus to his political aspirations considering the forthcoming convention. David Davis appears to have assumed the leadership of the voluntary group of Lincoln's supporters, combining their strength with the Chicago constituency. When the convention opened, it appeared like a one-man show with Seward apparently so far ahead it forecast a

"no contest." One news correspondent put it this way: "Senator Seward is head and shoulders above all competitors, in experience, in statesmanship, in authority, in influence, in every quality which can fit a man for the Presidency." Horace Greeley, the night before the balloting began, advised his *New York Tribune* associates that Seward would be victorious. It is known he was violently opposed to Seward.

The printer's delay in making the ballots ready, causing postponement of the balloting to the following day, was greatly in Lincoln's favor, as during the night considerable opposition to Seward had been generated. There were four, and possibly more, objections which caused the dissatisfaction: 1. He had failed to gain the support of important Pennsylvania. 2. Greeley and his *New York Tribune* were against him. 3. Corruption in the Legislature of New York while he was governor. 4. The dictatorial manner of his delegates at the convention.

The fact that Lincoln had been the Vice-Presidential choice of all the leading opponents gave him a great advantage over any other second choice. The first ballot gave Seward, 193, Lincoln, 102; second, Seward, 184, Lincoln, 181; third, Lincoln, 354, Seward, 110 1/2. No other candidate polled more than 50 1/2 votes.

One of the most convincing exhibits to support the supposition that there was a concerted effort to procure the Vice-Presidential nomination for Lincoln is a poster of his profile, now on display in the Lincoln National Life Foundation. On the margin of this eight and one-half by eleven inch lithograph is this note inscribed by George William Curtis, a Seward delegate from New York: "These prints were showered through the Wigwam immediately after Mr. Lincoln's nomination." There is no printed information on the broadside to reveal what office this pictorial candidate seeks, no name of the sponsoring organization, nor even the commercial printer. The fact that the circulars were not distributed until after Mr. Lincoln had been nominated for the Presidency, eliminates any indication that they were prepared as flyers to assist in his nomination for the Chief Executive office in the Nation.

Three possible distributors of the handbills were the Seward, Cameron, and Lincoln committees. The fact that Curtis of New York made no comment in his inscribed note about the origin of the posters, implies that the Seward group had no part in the distribution and no desire to boost Lincoln. The most likely sponsors were the Cameron-Lincoln loyalists, the earliest public advocates of Lincoln for the Vice-Presidency. Their western offices were in Chicago where the "tousled hair" photograph was made and used in producing the lithograph. While its rustic appearance would win votes in the West, it is doubtful if it would have any value in garnering votes in the East.

It is evident that the Lincoln convention group had nothing to do with the origin of the "tousled hair" flyer. The failure to use it before or during the balloting for the Presidency almost nullifies any connection of the lithograph with Lincoln's winning the office.

The distribution of the prints, however, does present a strong argument that Lincoln was a recognized contender for the Vice-Presidency at the Wigwam Convention. The conclusion might also be drawn, that inasmuch as Lincoln was the publicized selection for the minor office of at least four of the Presidential hopefuls, it is quite natural that if their first choice failed, the delegates would swing to their junior partner on the ticket as their next choice, to salvage at least a part of their original ticket. There seems to have been little attention paid to the potential strength of these original supporters of Abraham Lincoln as Vice-President.

Lincoln's reflections on the Vice-Presidency did not cease with his own nomination to the higher office. Quite naturally, he would have considerable interest in the selection of his running mate. He must have observed with more than common curiosity that in the balloting for the nomination the runner-up to the successful nominee was none other than Cassius Marcellus Clay. He had been active in securing Lincoln's nomination for the Presidency and made a speech from which this argument is excerpted: "It makes a great deal of difference to you whom you nominate. . . and it makes a much more vital difference to us [Kentuckians]. . . . We call upon you to nominate Abraham Lincoln, who knows us and understands our aspirations."

Even before Lincoln had an opportunity to meet the Vice-Presidential nominee, Hannibal Hamlin of Hamden, Maine, there were certain press releases that made Lincoln anxious to confer with his partner for the subsequent campaign. No sooner had the names of the two successful candidates reached the East than some newspapers announced surprise and dissatisfaction with the selections. One of the first reactions was the arrangement of the names of the victorious contestants. Many regarded Hamlin, an Eastern man, to be superior to his Western associate and referred to the combination as "The Upside-down Ticket."

While the new Presidential nominee may not have been as well known as Hamlin, the name Lincoln was a household word with the Hamlins. When Hannibal was but nine years old, a lawyer from Worcester, Massachusetts, whose name was Enoch Lincoln, came to live in the Hamlin home. Within the next five years, Enoch was elected to Congress and next became Governor of the State of Maine. He was Hannibal's hero and eventually young Hamlin went to Congress and also became Governor of Maine. Enoch Lincoln was a brother of Levi Lincoln, the host of Abraham Lincoln at Worcester in 1848.

Inasmuch as this commentary has relied on current public sentiment for a congenial atmosphere in which to develop this argument, it would seem agreeable to bring it to a conclusion in a similar fashion. The first person who put in writing a declaration with reference to Abraham Lincoln's eventually becoming President of the United States, was not a contemporary politician, but a "woman," Mary Todd of Lexington, Kentucky. While she was living with her sister, Mrs. Ninian Edwards at Springfield, Illinois, she became engaged to, and later married, Abraham Lincoln, a member of the Illinois Legislature. She wrote to one of her girl friends, Margaret Wickliffe, a daughter of the Governor of Kentucky, and after a playful, but not a very flattering, description of the man of her choice, she continued: "But I mean to make him to be President of the United States all the same. You will see that, as I always told you, I will yet be the President's wife." Governor Wickliffe, years later, after Lincoln had become President, came across the letter and wrote on it this endorsement, "the most remarkable letter ever written by one girl."

Researchers observing the intellectual training this young lady acquired at Lexington, "The Athens of the West," are agreed that her advanced formal education was superior to that of any other First Lady who occupied the Executive Mansion up to the time of Mrs. Lincoln's tenure. The cultural atmosphere which she created and nourished in her home, barely mentioned by most of her biographers, contributed greatly to the mental capacity of her husband.

We have observed that Lincoln was first a prospect for national recognition by becoming the runner-up in the contest for the nomination of Vice-President in the first National Republican Convention at Philadelphia in 1856. This nod, for one of the two Chief Executive offices, may have contributed more to his political advancement than we have recognized.

The multiple nods made to Lincoln as a Vice-Presidential nominee in the campaign of 1860 are almost inconceivable. It is doubtful if, ever before or since, one political aspirant has been the first choice as a running mate by so many different candidates for the Presidential nomination. Would it be presumtuous to assume that these unusual political alliances may have been largely responsible in elevating him to the office which his superiors coveted? As the dwindling hopes for the first place on the ticket faded out, in order to salvage a part of the preferred combination, would they not swing to their junior partner rather than to one of their competitors?

The National Republican Convention, convening at the Chicago Wigwam in 1860, had the unique distinction of making a beckoning jesture to a Vice-Presidential hopeful and announced that Abraham Lincoln of Illinois was the duly elected Presidential nominee.

Lincoln Lore

April, 1981

Bulletin of the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum. Mark E. Neely, Jr., Editor. Mary Jane Hubler, Editorial Assistant. Published each month by the Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801.

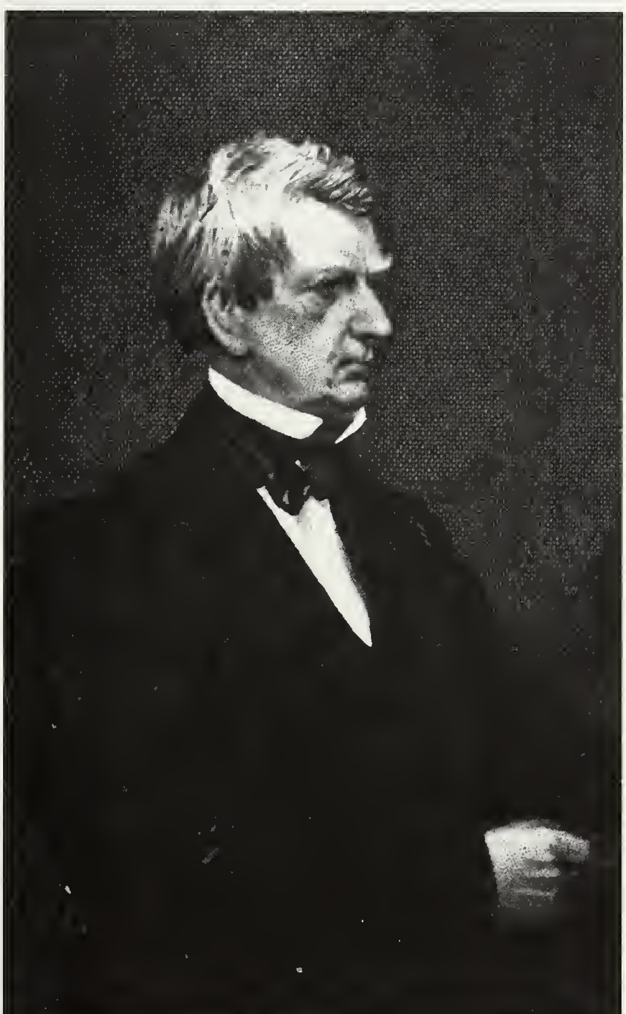
Number 1718

NEW LIGHT ON THE SEWARD-WELLES-LINCOLN CONTROVERSY?

Charles Francis Adams delivered a eulogy on William H. Seward in April, 1873, about six months after Seward's death. Isolated from day-to-day political developments during the Civil War by his residence in England and indebted to Secretary of State Seward for his appointment as Ambassador to England, Adams thought that Seward had been the mastermind of the Lincoln administration. His eulogy on Seward made that point clear. It also rankled Gideon Welles.

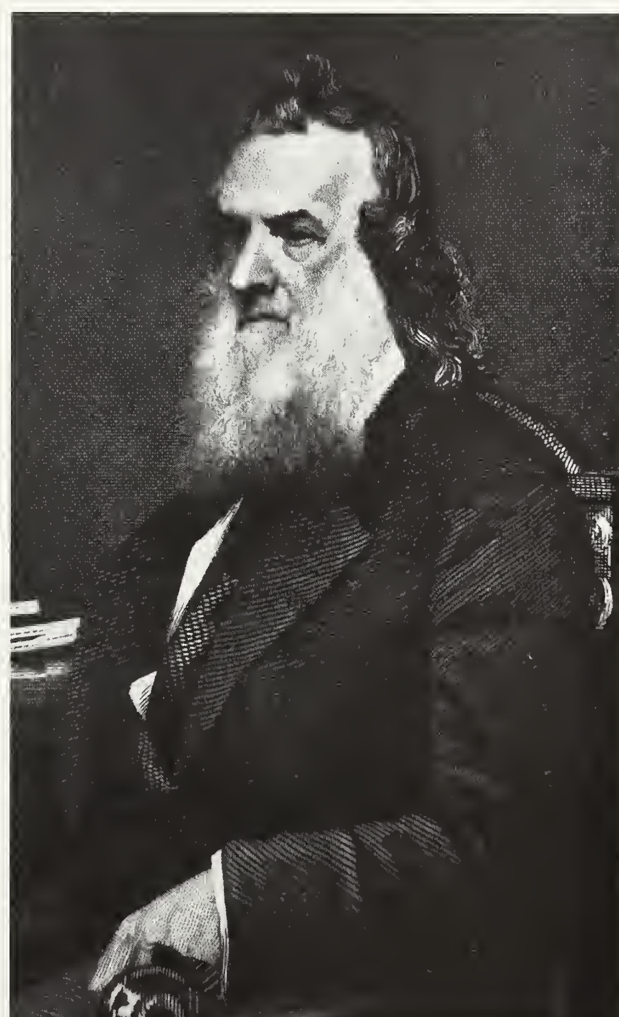
As Secretary of the Navy during the Lincoln administration, Welles undeniably occupied a better seat to observe the inner workings of the Lincoln administration. He had never liked Seward, and he possessed considerable talents as a polemical writer and delineator of acid portraits. Welles's rebuttal to Adams's eulogy appeared in a book, *Lincoln and Seward,* published in 1874. Welles, as his able biographer John Niven put it, "was the first promoter of the Lincoln legend." Seward's stock went down, never to rise above Lincoln's again.

Welles's book struck a responsive chord in George B. Lincoln, an obscure New York politician who had been Brooklyn's postmaster during the Civil War. After reading the book, he wrote a



From the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 1. William H. Seward.



From the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 2. Gideon Welles.

long letter to its author. The Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum acquired the letter this year, and it is published here for the first time.

Rivervale Bergin Co N.J. April 25th 1874

Hon Gideon Welles

My dear Sir

A thoughtful friend recently sent me a copy of the book called *"Lincoln & Seward"*. Having thanked him for sending it. I perform now the pleasant duty—of thanking *you* for writing it—I read these articles as they appeared in the *Galaxy* and then promised myself to write & thank you for the timely service you were rendering to our country in correcting at once the false impression that the address of *Mr Adams* was giving of the relative status in public affairs of *Pres. Lincoln* and his *Sec Mr Seward.*

Mr Lincoln was my personal friend long before he came to Washington in 1861. I think I remember telling you once of the style of apartments they gave *Mr Lincoln* at the Astor House in *March 1860.* and my complaint thereat—and telling the office boys there that the time would come when they would not offer him such a room as *No 17*!—telling them that he was to be the next President of the United States—at which they laughed immediately—asking me if I was *Crazy*! I refer to this, as I recollect the remark you made to me the first time we met after the inauguration when you said—"The Astor House people found a different set of apartments for *Mr Lincoln* when he came on this time from those they gave him a few years ago—did they not?"

Pardon me if I devote a little time this stormy night to giving you a few of my early impressions & remnicences of my good namesake. Had my name been *Smith* or *Jones* I would have known but little of *Lincoln,* about as much as the average of *Smith* & *Jones* family did previous to *1860.* But my name was *Lincoln*—and my business interests brought me in continual contact with those who knew my namesake well and regarded him much—and my name would perpetually suggest some anacdote or fact relating to *Abraham* which being repeated—became after awhile to convince me that if the reputation of a man who stood so strong at *home* could be made *national*—nothing could withstand it in a competing political canvas.

In these articles before me you refer to the presentation of *Mr Lincolns* name at *Phil*[a] in *1856* for the place of *Vice President*—a matter that few remembered in *1860.*

But when I read the account of the doings of that convention I said to myself—"That one hundred & ten votes if properly utilised will defeat *Seward* and nominate *Lincoln*.[''] Within thirty days thereafter I stated my belief to my intimate personal friends among whom I remember my then brilliant young friend *Theodore Tilton.* For the two years and more that followed I lost no opportunity when among those active in public affairs to declare my belief that *Lincoln* was the coming man—but I was looked upon as *cracked*! at least upon political subjects and then in the autumn of 1858 came the great controversy between *Lincoln* & *Douglass*—when people began to open their eyes a little; when the name of my friend was mentioned. The next winter I visited Springfield while their Legislature was in session.

I enquired who were *Lincolns* partial friends and influential withal. I was told that *Leonard Swett* a very able Lawyer and a member of the Senate was perhaps his most influential political friend. Ascertaining that there was to be a reception at the house of the *Governor (Bissell)* that night I thought that my best opportunity perhaps to make the acquaintance of *Swett* and other of *Lincolns* friends. I went expecting to meet *Lincoln* there himself—but he did not come. I then introduced myself to *Mr Swett* & told him my convictions in the matter of *Lincoln* as a future candidate for the Presidency and there gave him my reasons therefor. It was a small gathering—and soon I found myself surrounded by the warm friends of my namesake and then & there I proposed to them a plan of proceedure which if carried out by his friends would I thought result in giving to *Ill* the next candidate.

It seemed a new thought to these gentlemen—for all they hoped for was to place him *second* on the ticket *That* they thought would be easy—but to *head* the ticket was a new idea. *Seward* seemed to have the whole field. But I spoke as an Eastern man knowing that *Seward* was damaged somewhat by the perpetual howl of the New York Herald that he was a full fledged *abolitionist*! (which name he never, to the day of his death truly deserved) while on the other hand *Mr Lincoln* had not been in Washington to be mixed up with the *Helper Book matter* or any other matter requiring *defence. One hundred & ten* had declared their regard for him at Phil[a] and the *Douglass* controversy had given Mr Lincoln a national reputation among thoughtful men.

I returned to New York by way of Columbus O. and the City of Washington—calling upon my friends at the Capital—I knew but few—but among them were *Owen Lovejoy* of Ill & *John F. Potter* of Wis. To these I declared my views—but that *anybody* but myself saw the thing possible—did not appear. I sought *Mr Greeley* and had a long talk with him. and also with *Gov Morgan*—who was Sewards warm friend. Gov Morgan took down from his case a copy of the doings of the Phil[a] convention and read to me a speech made there by some western man—a rough subject—who had nominated *Mr Lincoln* there. I went to *Parton* to see if he would not write a *life* of *Lincoln*—but he said he had no *impulse* that way—while he liked the man—but he could not write without *impulse!* Said he could write the life of *Burr* whom he disliked because he had an *impulse* to do so.

Another year rolled arround when I again found myself in the west. *Carpenter* in his *'Six Months at the White House'* tells the story of my finding at *Naples* on the Ill. River an old man by the name of *Pollard Simmons* who told me the story of *Lincoln* having lived with him while yet a young man and working—among other things at *Splitting Rails!* When Simmonds told me that story I said to myself—I would not take the vote of *three small states* for *that* fact.

In occasional letters to the *New York Tribune* & to the *Press & Tribune* of *Chicago* I had taken occasion to say kind words for *Lincoln*—but not as a Presidential candidate—and when I reached *Sandoval* in Southern Ill I wrote a letter to the *Press* and *Tribune* giving the facts of my interview with Mr Simmonds & also some fact concerning Lincoln which *Shelby Cullom* (late M. C. whom few will remember) gave me in relation to the manner of his (Lincolns) studying law. These facts were taken from my Chicago letter by the New York Tribune and published a few days later under the head of *Personal of Lincoln.* My object was accomplished. My friend was now advertised as a *Rail Splitter* and the use made of that political *war club* was all that I could have reasonably asked. I think it was even better than the *Hard Cider* dodge.

I again sought *Swett.* He was practicing law in court at *Bloomington*—before Judge *David Davis* I again went over my programe—and when he had heard me he asked me to wait until the court adjourned for he wanted me to talk to *Davis* as I had done to him. This I did.

I kept busy as best I could up to the time of the meeting of the convention and finally wrote the leading communication in the *Press & Tribune* published the morning the convention met from my place of business in New York—claiming as a New Yorker that *Lincoln* would make a better run than *Seward.*

Three weeks ago I met in *Chicago Mr Swett.* He took me by the hand and said *Mr Lincoln*! you were the first man who gave us any confidence in our state that we could nominate *Lincoln.* He had said the same before at my house in Brooklyn.

Believing that I had something to do in giving courage to *Mr Lincolns* home friends, and having furnished the *Rail Splitting* club for the party I thought you might be interested sufficiently in my story to read it.

Two little incidents I will relate which may, under the circumstances interest you. Early in January 1861 I visited my friend at Springfield. Spending an evening at his house by invitation—in the course of conversation the President remarked that he had tendered to *Mr Bates* a seat in his Cabinet and asked me what I thought of it I told him that I thought it a proper appointment in all respects—and especially a compliment to a class with whom *Mr Bates* had acted politically and who had come in with us. I then said *Mr President!* Pardon me if I tell you what else I would do—and then I said "were I in your place

From the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 3. Carl Schurz.

I would say to *Mr Seward* Sir!—what have I at command that you will accept? You can be my *Secretary of State* or if you prefer—the court of *St James* is at your service["]—At this *Mrs Lincoln* rallied with "Never! Never! Seward in the Cabinet! Never! If things should go on all right—the credit would go to *Seward* —if they went wrong—the blame would fall upon my husband. Seward in the Cabinet! *Never*!" I then stated to *Madam* that she had not waited to hear the remainder of what I had to say—which was *this* "That will be *your* part I hope *Mr Seward* will have the sense of propriety and *delicacy* to say in reply" - "Sir! I am a *Senator* and just now I desire nothing more." *"I do not desire to see Mr Seward in the Cabinet" Mr. Lincoln* performed his part—but the sense of *delicacy,* & as it seemed then to me *propriety* was lacking upon the other side.

I may be ungenerous, but I can never divest my mind of the impression that had the result of the war been the reverse of what it was—there would been few tears to be shed by *Somebody*!

One other story & I will worry you no farther. In the early part of 1867 I was in Wisconsin, and spent a day at *East Troy* with *Hon John F. Potter.* He then related to me what occurred at the rooms of the *Sec of State* in the early part of *1861. Schultz* name had been mentioned as a candidate for a mission abroad and one afternoon (Says Potter) "Doolittle & myself called upon the President to advance Mr *Schultz* interests.

The President said "Yes. I am in favor of giving Mr *Schultz* a foreign appointment—but the Secretary opposes it." and begged of them to call upon the Secretary in relation to it. This seemed strange said Potter—for as between *Lincoln & Seward* at Chicago—*Schultz* was a *Seward* man. So they called upon *Mr Seward* and stated their business. Mr S. answered that he was utterly opposed to sending men abroad who were exiles and whose opinions were obnoxious to those to whom they were acredited—and therefore was opposed to the appointment of *Mr S. Potter* then said to the *Sec* "—I thought we sent men abroad to represent *our* views—not *theirs*!" After exhausting all argument with the *Sec* to no avail—they arose to depart—Saying as they went that *Mr Schultz* would be disappointed at not having his cooperation in the matter. At this the Sec. rose in great rage—swinging his arms and rushing across the room exclaiming "dissappointed! disappointed! talk to *me* about disappointment! look at *Me*! *simply a clerk of the President*!["]

You may have heard *Sec Stanton* tell this story of the Spanish Minister who called upon him one day and declared himself *thus "Stanton*! you have the *funniest* country here of all the earth—you have *no* government—but you move along—all the same—just as though you had[.] Stanton! there are three things which God almighty seems to take special care of *viz Drunkards*! *Little children* and the *United States of America*!["]

That "special care" it seems to me was our national salvation.

Sincerely thanking you for your timely labor to protect the reputation and precious memory of our mutual friend

Believe me
with great respect
Your friend
Geo. B. Lincoln

How reliable a witness was George B. Lincoln? Can we really believe a man who claimed, fourteen years after the fact, to have originated the famous "rail-splitter" image? If George Lincoln was shrewd enough to realize in 1856 that Abraham Lincoln could take the Republican nomination from Seward, he was more politically astute than most of the politicians in America—moreso even than Abraham Lincoln himself. Did George Lincoln really ask James Parton to write a campaign biography in the winter of 1858-1859, months before the idea occurred to Abraham Lincoln's political intimates in Illinois? Did Abraham Lincoln, as President-elect, really invite the would-be Brooklyn postmaster to Springfield and discuss Cabinet appointments in his presence? Would Mrs. Lincoln, whose knowledge of the intentions of her husband's administration never appeared very strong, have been present at such a discussion? Could a small-time politician who could not recall Carl Schurz's name accurately have possibly known the things he claimed to know? In short, was George B. Lincoln a blowhard or a knowledgeable insider?

We can never know the answer for certain, but there is some good evidence that George B. Lincoln was not a thoroughly reliable witness. The Illinois State Historical Library, for example, owns a letter from the Brooklyn politician to Francis B. Carpenter which is an admission of error in telling a story about President Lincoln. Carpenter, who had spent six months in the White House painting a canvas which celebrated the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation, capitalized on his experiences after the President's assassination by publishing reminiscences in various periodicals. Some of these were Carpenter's own recollections, but others he gleaned from other associates of the President—including the Brooklyn postmaster. On December 19, 1867, George B. Lincoln told Carpenter: "I notice in the papers a card from Ex Governor Seymour of New York denying the truthfulness of the alleged interview between the late President Lincoln & himself—as reported in your reminiscences of Mr. Lincoln as published in the Independent of the 12th inst. Having stated this story to you—as it was given to me—*falsely* as it now appears I take the earliest moment to express my regret that I should have been the means of furnishing an item untrue in itself and offensive to all concerned." He went on to explain that he had been fooled by the wealth of details supplied by his informant.

To his credit, George B. Lincoln did apologize to Carpenter

and allowed him to use his letter as an explanation of the error. Moreover, this incident is not enough to cause historians to dismiss all of George Lincoln's assertions of contacts with the President. In Carpenter's book, *Six Months at the White House*, published a year before the article with the Seymour story, the Pollard Simmons anecdote appeared. In addition to the rail-splitting incident, George Lincoln had also repeated Simmons's story that Abraham Lincoln had refused a surveying job offered him by a Democratic appointee as surveyor. The future President was reputed to have said, ". . . I never have been under obligation to a Democratic administration, and I never intend to be so long as I can get my living another way." Carpenter asked the President whether the story were true, and he replied: "It is correct about our working together; but the old man must have stretched the facts somewhat about the survey of the county. I think I should have been very glad of the job at that time, no matter what administration was in power." Once again, George B. Lincoln was partly in error—but only partly. He seems to have been consistently guilty of repeating stories about Abraham Lincoln without checking his sources, but he may well have repeated accurately what he heard.

Without doubt, George B. Lincoln did have some contact with his more famous namesake. He had opportunities to visit Illinois as the representative of a New York dry goods firm. Carpenter himself saw George Lincoln in the President's office on the Sunday before Lincoln's reinauguration in 1865. And several letters in the Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress prove that George B. Lincoln had occasional contacts with the President.

George Lincoln wrote his first letter to Abraham Lincoln on May 19, 1860, just after the Republican nominating convention. He congratulated the Republican nominee and chatted for a while about their common surname. An old Whig himself, the less famous Lincoln noted, "I have never known a Lincoln who was a *Loco Foco*! Not one—all have been Whigs to a man." In 1860, he claimed to have declared his faith in Abraham Lincoln's ability to gain the Republican nomination "East and West for near two years"—not, it should be noted, since 1856. He feared that Hannibal Hamlin "will not greatly improve the ticket anywhere that we need help—but it does not *drag*—we are safe." He closed the letter by saying, characteristically, "I am about sending to *Father Simmonds at Havana* for a couple of those *'Rails'*!"

On September 22, 1860, George Lincoln wrote the nominee again, mentioning "our mutual friend [Shelby] Cullom," from whom the Brooklyn travelling salesman had obtained "some time ago a profile likeness of yourself—for which you kindly sat to gratify an enthusiastic young republican—(an *ex* democrat) who desired to issue from it a campaign medal." George Lincoln sent by "your worthy neighbor Mr. Alvey," who was returning to Springfield, some presents to Abraham Lincoln's children: "a few specimens of the Medals—which are here considered the best which have been issued." "Please present them as complimentary from *William Legget Bramhall* and our two sons—lads—who are 'Lincolns too,'" he wrote jovially. He also sent photographs to the boys and to Mrs. Lincoln. He concluded the letter with observations on the political scene in New York. Central New York state was safe, the Know-Nothing vote was safe, the disappointment over Seward's loss of the nomination was largely abated, and the old Southern Whigs with whom he did business thought the Union would be safe in Abraham Lincoln's hands.

After the election George B. Lincoln sent the usual recommendations for office and letters of introduction for businessmen seeking favors. President Lincoln was still seeing correspondence from George Lincoln in 1864. Like almost all politicians in New York, the Brooklyn postmaster became embroiled in the patronage controversies surrounding the New York Custom House. The Lincoln administration's Indian Commissioner, William P. Dole, visited New York early in 1864 to investigate the controversy. After his return, George Lincoln wrote to inform him of strong sentiment for the appointment of Simeon Draper as Collector. He said that Hiram Barney, the incumbent, was very unpopular. Though he made clear his own opposition to the interests of Salmon P. Chase, he did not stress Barney's alleged pro-Chase affinities as an objection to his continuance in office. He argued, rather, that Barney was very unpopular with merchants and that mercantile people did not want a lawyer as the Collector. Lincoln also mentioned in the letter the fact that he kept a bust of the President draped in a flag in his home in Brooklyn.

George B. Lincoln was a windy old bore. Of that there can be no doubt. His letter to Welles covered seven and one-half pages of paper. His affection for President Lincoln—which grew out of the coincidence of shared surnames—was genuine, however. He did have some close contacts with the Lincoln administration. Though he tended to be somewhat uncritical in repeating stories he heard about the President, George B. Lincoln might have known what he was talking about. From all evidence political bias did not account for his willingness to think the worst of Seward. After all, the opposition to Hiram Barney was led by the Seward-Weed wing of the Republican party in New York, and he had clearly been with Seward's men in that fight. George B. Lincoln's anecdotes may be questionable, but they certainly appear worthy of further investigation.

CABINET SERIES—No. 2.

LINCOLN'S "GUARDIAN ANGEL."

Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1863, by J. Hall & Co., in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York.

From the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 4. As late as 1863, Seward still had a reputation as the strong man in the administration.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN FOR VICE PRESIDENT 1856

A small gathering was organized in Washington, D. C., on January 19, 1855, in which it was stated that "we do associate ourselves together under the name and title of the Republican association of Washington, D. C." A call for a national convention was issued January 17, 1856, for a meeting to be held at Pittsburgh, Pa., on the 22nd of February.

The Philadelphia convention of June 17, 1856, was marked by speeches arousing the greatest enthusiasm. The cheering was constant. The brutal attack upon Sumner in the Senate chamber at Washington had taken place about a month before the convention met, and had aroused the greatest indignation.

The Philadelphia convention met according to schedule. Hon. Robert Emmett, son of an Irish patriot and nephew of the famous Robert Emmett, was made temporary chairman. His address was a masterly effort, interrupted with "cheers," "loud cheers" and "great excitment," according to the newspapers of the time. Col. Henry S. Lane, of Indiana, was made permanent chairman of the convention. The famous Owen Lovejoy, of Illinois, made a rousing address: Hon. Henry Wilson, United States senator from Massachusetts, followed, saying: "Now, sir, we wish to defeat James Buchanan and to enthrone liberty in the government of this republic." It is interesting to note that James G. Blaine, then a young and brilliant editor in Maine, was a delegate to this convention.

Of the delegates from 20 states, all but 38 (24 from Pennsylvania and 14 from Ohio) voted for John C. Fremont as their choice for President. A scene of wild and boundless enthusiasm ensued, baffling all description, when the nomination of Fremont was made unanimous. The delegates arose in a body, took off their hats, waved them aloft, shouting the name of Fremont. Immediately a large white banner was raised, bearing the words "John C. Fremont for President." Almost as if by magic banners with the name of "Fremont for President" were displayed in the streets, the crowds catching the spirit of the occasion.

LINCOLN

Although William L. Dayton, of New Jersey, was nominated for Vice President, the name of Abraham Lincoln was presented amid tremendous cheering. Hon. John Allison, of Pennsylvania, said "he knew Lincoln to be a prince of good fellows," and Col. William B. Archer, of Illinois, said "he had been acquainted with the man who had been named (Lincoln) for 30 years, and knew him well, and he was enjoying remarkably good health and was as pure a patriot as ever lived."

Judge Spaulding, of Ohio, asked: "Can he fight?" Colonel Archer replied, "Yes! (Great applause.) Have I not told you he was born in Kentucky? He's strong mentally; he's strong physically; he's strong in every way."

Judge John M. Palmer, of Illinois, seconded the name of Lincoln. He said he had known Lincoln long and knew he was a good man. "We can lick Buchanan anyway, but I think we can do it a little easier if we have Lincoln on the ticket with Fremont." Lincoln received 110 votes, Dayton 253 votes. Judge Palmer's prediction did not come true. Fremont receiving 114 and Buchanan 174 electoral votes. However, the Republican party waited only four years for its first triumph.

A curious incident of the Republican convention of 1860 in Chicago was the appearance of Horace Greeley, of New York, chosen a delegate from Oregon. The Chicago papers on the first day of the convention mentioned that Mr. Greeley had been seen around the lobbies of the hotels with a placard reading "For President, William H. Seward" pinned on the back of his swallow-tail coat. It was considered quite a joke, since Greeley himself had had a disagreement with Seward and Weed, and the editor had announced in the New York Tribune "the firm of Seward, Weed & Co. was dissolved."

The convention met in the big wigwam built expressly for the occasion. It was a rough affair, a raised platform for the delegates and speakers, a floor space without seats for the spectators who happened to have tickets. There was a gallery for ladies with escorts.

GREELEY'S FEAR OF LINCOLN

In his story of the convention of 1860, Mr. Addison G. Proctor, a delegate from Michigan, relates this incident: "Mr. Greeley," said one of our group, "what do you think of Abraham Lincoln as a candidate?" "Lincoln," replied Greeley, "is a very adroit politician. He has a host of friends out here in Illinois who seem to see something in him that the rest of us haven't seen yet. He has a very interesting history that would make good campaign literature, but the trouble with Lincoln is this, he has had no experience in national affairs, and facing a crisis as we all believe, I doubt if his nomination would be acceptable. It is too risky an undertaking."

The clever conduct of the Illinois delegation, under the leadership of David Davis, aided by the oratory of Cassius M. Clay, of Kentucky, and the cunning arguments of Governor Lane, of Indiana, says Mr. Proctor, brought about the final nomination of Mr. Lincoln.

The reading of the platform was interrupted by tremendous bursts of applause, especially those sections devoted to the tariff and to homesteads.

At midnight before the third day of the convention, Greeley telegraphed the New York Tribune that it was his belief Seward would be nominated. It did not seem possible to unite the opposition against him. He was to be put in nomination by the eloquent lawyer, Evarts, whose charming and persuasive manner would disarm all criticism. The Seward delegates marched to the wigwam, led by brass bands, and with banners flying. They were confident of victory.

The view of that vast audience on the morning of the third and last day was a sight never to be forgotten. The cheers for Seward and Lincoln as their names were spoken fairly drowned out the nominating speeches. As the balloting proceeded, the enthusiastic shouts of Lincoln's friends in the vast audience were hard to control.

NOMINATION OF LINCOLN

On the third ballot Lincoln was within one and one-half votes of a nomination. Amid excitement and confusion, Mr. Carter, chairman of the Ohio delegation, though a stutterer, stammered out a change of four votes from his state to Lincoln, and the deed was done. The entire crowd rose to their feet, shouting madly; women waving their handkerchiefs frantically. Amid the booming of cannon on the outside Lincoln was declared the nominee.

During all this excitement, the New York delegates sat quietly in their seats, stunned. Finally Mr. Evarts stood upon his chair and said, "We came from a great state with, we thought, the name of a great statesman," concluding by moving to make the nomination of Lincoln unanimous. But the friends of Seward were aghast and unnerved. Mr. Weed's biographer says "he shed bitter tears over his defeat."

WRIGHT

Seward wrote Weed: "I wish I were sure that your sense of disappointment is as light as my own."

The opening prayer on the third day of the convention was made by Rev. Mr. Green, in which he used these words: "We entreat Thee, that at some future but not distant day, the evils which now invest the body politic shall not only have been arrested in their progress, but wholly eradicated from the system. And may the pen of the historian trace an intimate connection between that glorious consummation and the transactions of this convention." Who in that vast assembly looked for a fulfillment of those prophetic words in the short space of five years?

Lincoln and Hamlin went forth into political battle and won the first great victory of the Republican party.

Lincoln 1856 Presidential references

Judge McLean for President.

Banks, Seward, Blair or Fremont, no

Blair or Fremont for Vice Pres.

Thursday June 19 First National Republican convention convened in Philadelphia

Friday June 20 Chicago paper contain proceedings Decatur Urbana Whitney (78 81)

Monday June 23 address Bolton meeting in Evening. Election in State of Illinois will during campaign devote considerable time to politics.